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# TLS

## THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 1969

# Money in writing—2

### The writer and money

by Witold Gombrowicz 1045

### Linguistic signs and monetary signs

by Jean Pierre Faye 1053

### The writer in a small language-community

by Halldór Laxness 1057

### The two languages of economics

by Bertrand de Jouvenel 1061

### The future of international publishing

by Fritz Raddatz 1089

### Money in literature

by Edoardo Sanguineti 1065

### The writer and his market

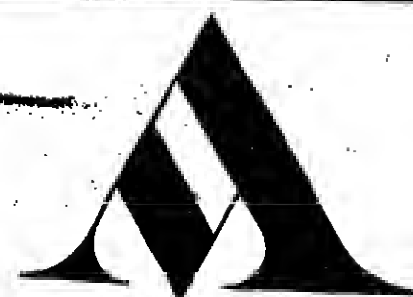
by Rudolf Leonhardt 1073

### The literary prize system

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the contributions to our earlier, domestic symposium on "Money in Writing" on July 24 pursued an unassumingly critical line which nowhere led them to support on literary theory. But then it is to more deadly or disreputable way down the guillotine on a literary symposium, this time to invoke one of the philosophies of writing which has been outcasted by the literary establishment. When it is the economic life of the writer that is being discussed, any case exorable for the contestants to sacrifice the sorry facts for the consolations of a theory. Yet peel the statistics marshalled, for example, by Edward Finkler and you expose a stark which is a powerful invitation to despair. The problem is one which we had some months ago as the "quarrel" between Mammon and the Muse, or between Mammon and a proper financial return for the artist.

of the contributions to this "Money in Writing" number the same has been re-joined, with a new sense and vocabulary which is a new way of looking at the world. The unwillingness of many writers to submit without protest to the economic system they have been brought into. The majority of the social sciences now active in western Europe are men of the moderate or extreme political creeds require them to revolutionary view of the writer's place in society. In such a perspective, Mammon is in 5 volumes. The majority of the social sciences now active in western Europe are men of the moderate or extreme political creeds require them to revolutionary view of the writer's place in society. In such a perspective, Mammon is in 5 volumes. The majority of the social sciences now active in western Europe are men of the moderate or extreme political creeds require them to revolutionary view of the writer's place in society. In such a perspective, Mammon is in 5 volumes.

for political activists, and especially during an apocalyptic, the writer's problem has dimensions closed to the writer. There is, in the first place, the writer of the left-wing writer pledged to the market economy who is asked to publish his convictions in the very apparatus he is set on

abolishing. A troublesome knot for the purists to untie, but one which has helped in Holland and Germany to bring about the hopeful compromise outlined by Fritz Raddatz in his article on the future of publishing. In Germany, as in other countries, publishing firms are being enrolled into faceless combines whose size can only make their capitalism both more obvious and more offensive to a radical author. One group of German writers has therefore opted for the intimacy of their own publishing house, whose profits will be distributed exclusively among those working for it.

This Verlag der Autoren is not at all a communist scheme, simply an arrangement to ensure that authors get a better deal out of the existing market conditions. In those countries where the publisher is the state and where writers are sheltered from the rigours that stem from the profit-motive, there are of course darker reasons for them to feel deprived. Once he is a bureaucratic writer becomes, as Witold Gombrowicz says, a "guide, tutor or spokesman", his dignity having been annihilated when he lost his freedom of expression. Gombrowicz's own essay, written for us shortly before his death during the summer, is a breezy manifesto of separatism, and restates the Romantic notion of the

writer as a man dedicated to self-expression and with an aristocratic scorn for the favours of the market.

In the classification advanced by another contributor, Edoardo Sanguineti, Gombrowicz looks strangely like the model of an avant-garde writer. Sanguineti presents the avant-garde as a reluctant satellite of the literary community which battles against the violation of its innocence and whose last defence in the moment of surrender is a cry of "rapé". The ideal of this avant-garde is the artist whose work is *anti-commercial*, his flouting of accepted practices being too extreme for even the most classic market to absorb him. But it is a good deal harder than it once was to be an exemplary failure of this sort and the criteria of unsaleability have shrunk, so that the continued presence of Sanguineti's shock troops is in peril.

But it is in France, as one would anticipate (especially after May, 1968), that the most exhaustive theories have been bred to expose the victimization of the writer by a bourgeois society. The two essays which we print here, by Jean Pierre Faye and Philippe Sollers, come from either side of a highly productive schism in the intellectual life of Paris, even if both join in unmasking the class prejudice hurled in the institutions of language. Their recipes for Revolution are quite

different, with Faye pitting his "Poetry" against what look like the more materialist paving-stones of Sollers. Faye plugs a poetic irony as the tool for exposing the mechanisms of the market without conniving in them, while Sollers, in his commentary on the philosopher Jacques Derrida, leads a rarefied campaign against logocentrism and phonetic scripts which allows him an ingenious salute towards Chairman Mao's ideographic thoughts, as well as a rousing axiom: "writing is to speech what China is to Europe".

It may well be that these contrary programmes will be judged too deep or too elaborate to be quite real, but their great value must lie in an appreciation of the common conviction they are founded on: that there are profound parallels to be recognized between economic systems and linguistic ones. These parallels do not have to be worked quite so exclusively as they are here for their dialectical yield, and a grasp of them could certainly tone up anyone's literary philosophy.

If such refinements can never be anything more than an invisible export from Paris to London, the same does not go for the French institution analysed by Jean-François Revel in his article on "The Literary Prize System". The recent inauguration of our own Booker fiction prize could have been a first step towards the prize systems that junction so rowdily in France and Italy. Pessimists who fear that it was well cheered by Revel's luminous demonstration that in Europe it is certainly not literature that is the dominant force that gain from the prize system. The terms of the Booker prize, and the way its jury is chosen, are not such that they imply its ultimate degradation into a simulacrum of the Prix Goncourt, but as publicity accumulates around the award itself it might set in train the artificial polarization of the book market which Revel deplores. He himself advocates a prize system that is a humane corrective for "difficult" writers, penalized by the conformism of book buyers.

There is, then, a conclusion widely shared by our contributors: that the book market cannot be left to function as if it were an ordinary commodity market. If it is not going to be swept away, then it must be tinkered with. Those who wonder how could do worse than study Halldór Laxness's column account of the way matters are managed in Iceland. Some sort of ideal intelligible system, which would be worth the effort of publishing, is a small community power, the literary prize system, the publisher and a generous government.

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Four pages of fiction	1048 to 1051
Brian Crozier's "Masters of Power"	1052
"Darwin and the Beagle"	1056
Russian aesthetics	1068
Günter Grass	1077
Paul Eluard	1095
Carlo Emilio Gadda	1099
Paul Claudel	1102
Popular literature	1104 to 1106
Ignatius and "Nyugat"	1109
Poems by Kim Jang-Op (1058) and Stephen Spender (1062)	
Letters on Captain Swing, Permissions, Johnson on Shakespeare	1079

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25.9.69 TLS: 1055

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Die Linke antwortet Jürgen Habermas.  
211pp. Frankfurt: Europäische Ver-  
lagsanstalt. DM 7.

JÜRGEN HABERMAS: *Protestbewe-  
gung und Hochschulkultur*. 275pp.  
DM 5. Technik und Wissenschaft als  
"Ideologie". 169pp. Frankfurt:  
Suhrkamp. DM 3.

The first two volumes under review  
are required reading for anyone  
curious to make sense of the wave of  
student protest currently under way  
on the territory of the German  
Federal Republic. They interlock  
for the essay collection published  
under the title "The Left Replies to  
Jürgen Habermas" starts off from a  
critical dissection of Professor  
Habermas's "Theses" of June, 1968,  
the text of which is reproduced under  
the original title "Die Scheinrevolu-  
tion und ihre Kinder" ("The Pseudo-  
Revolution and its Children").  
Habermas in turn prefaces his 1969  
collection, *Protestbewegung und  
Hochschulkultur*, with an introduction  
positively reacting to the outraged reaction  
of the self-styled Leftists to his earlier  
strictures on their tactics. Thus the  
two conflicting positions may fairly  
be said to have been stated in a man-  
ner enabling the reader to grasp what  
the debate is about. When one con-  
siders the mutual incomprehension  
so manifest in recent transatlantic  
attempts to get a discussion going,  
this circumstance deserves to be  
noted.

It is likewise noteworthy that all  
the participants share certain theo-  
retical assumptions which may  
broadly be described as Marxist,  
the principal difference being that Habermas  
treats his opponents as "neo-  
anarchists" while they return the  
compliment by labelling him a re-  
formist Social Democrat. This cleav-  
age has its counterparts elsewhere,  
but must not be confused with the  
current French line-up separating  
communists from ultra-leftists.  
Stalinism has no friends in West Ger-  
many, and even Leninism is not  
really at issue, for the German New  
Left has retained virtually nothing  
of Lenin's theory of imperialism  
(which may shortly have to be  
abandoned should Russia and China  
come to blows). The curious anal-  
ogy of Mao and Marxists typical  
of the radicals among the student  
leaders is quite incompatible with  
Leninist notions of party discipline.  
Hence there is nothing that corre-

## A moral illness?

ALAN CASSELS: *Fascist Italy*. 136pp.  
Routledge and Kegan Paul. 20s.  
(Paperback, 9s.)

RENZO DE FELICE: *Lo interpretazio-  
ni del fascismo*. 222pp. Bari:  
Latorze. L.1,000.

GAETANO SALVEMINI: *L'Italia vista  
dall'America*. 751pp. Milan: Feltrin-  
elli. L.6,000.

*Fascist Italy* is undistinguished but  
on the whole it gives an adequate  
account of its subject. There is  
nothing original about it but also,  
apart from a certain number of  
errors, nothing misleading.

Most of the errors are of little im-  
portance, though it seems odd that  
Mr. Cassels should think that Stres  
is in Switzerland or that the Duca  
d'Aosta was King Victor  
Emmanuel's brother. Mr. Cassels  
states the number of Slavs who lived  
in fascist Italy quite wrongly, and  
has the wrong date for the signing  
of the Steel Pact. This last is per-  
haps a misprint; he quotes an im-  
portant sentence from R. A. Web-  
ster's *Christian Democracy in Italy*,  
stating that with the Italian Agree-  
ments "Italy became a constitutional  
state among the great powers of  
Europe". Mr. Cassels, however, says  
that "Clemente Muzio" but it  
seems to be the Catholic  
Church which was founded in

sponds to the Trotskyist version of  
French Communism, if only because  
the German student rebels are iso-  
lated from the working class of their  
country, whereas their French coun-  
terparts do have a following among  
the younger workers. Lastly, there  
is the absence of anything describ-  
able as a revolutionary tradition  
within German society, the complete  
abandonment of a socialist perspec-  
tive—let alone a Marxist one—on the  
part of the S.P.D., and the transforma-  
tion of that party into a pillar of  
liberal democracy and the market  
economy.

On all these counts the West Ger-  
man situation would appear to re-  
semble the contemporary British  
scene, rather than the very different  
line-up in France, where socialists,  
communists, and ultra-leftists are  
divided over the question how and  
when socialism can be introduced;  
not over the best means of making  
people forget that there ever was a  
socialist tradition to begin with. Con-  
versely, since Germans are familiar  
with Marx, there is no need for the  
participants to start from the letter  
"A" so far as philosophy is con-  
cerned. In this respect the contrast  
with the American situation could  
hardly be more glaring.

Since all the participants are  
academics of various degrees of emi-  
nence, Habermas's critics include  
his old teacher Professor Abendroth  
in Marburg, who remains convinced  
that his erstwhile star pupil is "the  
most productive socio-philosophical  
thinker in the Federal Republic";  
the amenities are observed. Much of  
the controversy moreover mingles at  
a stratospheric level of theorizing  
about the innate tendencies of de-  
velopment inherent in late-capitalist  
society.

For all that, the ultra-leftists have  
not altogether forgotten Habermas, by  
hinting at the possibility of student  
anarchism turning into what in 1967  
he described as "left-wing fascism".  
To a generation unfamiliar with the  
writings of Sorel and the career of  
Mussolini, this suggestion seems to  
have come as a shock, a circumstance  
which illustrates the drawbacks of  
illiteracy. Habermas has since qual-  
ified his warning in his letter to *Frank-  
furter Allgemeine* of June 26, 1967, reprinted in  
*Protestbewegung und Hochschulkultur*,  
while maintaining that "the  
socio-psychological potential in  
which Dutschke appeared is highly  
ambivalent". Having spent some  
time in New York and paid a visit to

Lithuan War of 1911, also favoured  
intervention in 1915; this is in-  
correct. Perhaps it would be fair to  
complain that Mr. Cassels neglects  
fascist organization of Italians out-  
side Italy and fascist international  
intrigues mostly conducted through  
the Italian press attached in foreign  
capitals. It is a pity to have neg-  
lected the Futurist component in the  
fascist make-up, and above all it is  
a missed opportunity not to contrast  
Mussolini's police chief, the urbane  
Bocchini, with the sadistic out-  
rigger.

Professor De Felice, not the most  
lucid of writers at any time, has in  
*Le interpretazioni del fascismo* made  
a patchwork of different interpre-  
tations of various so-called fascisms.  
Fascism in Italy, Mr. Cassels has  
shown competently, grew partly out  
of the foibles and weaknesses of the  
Risorgimento but was very much the  
child of the First World War: to a  
large extent it was merely the cult of  
Mussolini conducted by himself.  
According to Croce it was a moral  
illness, according to the communists  
it was the capitalist reply to new  
working-class demands. The com-  
munists deliberately called all their  
enemies fascists, thus confusing  
many movements in many countries  
which arose in combat the influence  
of Soviet Russia. Professor De Felice,  
however, that historiography is now  
being written from the communists'  
point of view, and that it is tending

Berkeley, he appears to have been  
disconcerted by the element of infant-  
ile regression plainly discernible in  
the silly antics of that section of the  
American protest movement whose  
outlook may fairly be termed "nihil-  
ist". His German critics of course  
resent nothing more than this employ-  
ment of psychological labels in what  
they conceive to be a theoretical  
debate. In fairness, to the German  
S.D.S. and its French counterparts  
an outsider may note that anti-intel-  
lectualism is not yet regarded as the  
hallmark of the true revolution-  
ary.

A good part of Habermas's  
contribution to the debate deals with  
fairly down-to-earth matters, such as  
educational reform and the role of  
the university in modern society. An  
earlier essay collection of his pub-  
lished in 1968 under the title *Leben  
und Wissenschaft als "Ideologie"*  
raised the debate about scientific  
philosophical level where the author  
turned out to have more in com-  
mon with Hegelians like Adorno and  
Max Weber. A perusal of the  
little volume also helps to explain  
why the student radicals were  
hurt by Habermas's criticism; it  
had come to regard him as their in-  
tellectual leader. It was a shock  
when the most distinguished  
neo-Marxist in the German  
academic world turned out to  
be a democrat who did not want  
to see the traditionally unsatisfac-  
tory educational institutions of the  
Federal Republic destroyed and  
branch for the benefit of a "cultural  
revolution" whose purpose  
seemed to have only the most  
vague notions about what to put in  
place. The subsequent discussion  
so far as it deserves this name, has  
therefore also some exhibitionist  
overtones, turned on the part of  
students, turned on the question  
whether democratic socialism is  
still conceivable in a situation where  
the working class had been integrated  
within "late-capitalist" society.

The topic has become familiar. To  
that West Germany offers social-  
ism distinct from social democracy  
as distinct from social democracy  
less promising field of action than  
does neighbouring France, it is  
to state the obvious. But it is the  
result of trends inherent in "late  
capitalism", or of the exposed po-  
sition of a country bordering on  
Hrusak's Czechoslovakia? The  
debate continues.

*L'Italia vista dall'America* is  
seventh of nine fat volumes of Sal-  
vemini's writings which are cur-  
rently being edited by his disciples.  
Other volumes deal respectively  
with medieval and modern history,  
education, the question of the day,  
the Italian foreign policy, and  
fascism. After a number  
of difficult years in exile, Sal-  
vemini's mind was offered a profes-  
sorship at Harvard in 1925. He sub-  
sequently became an American citizen  
in December, 1940, and remained in  
the United States until 1945, when he  
returned to Italy. The volume under review  
with criticism of Allied policy  
towards Italy or with criticism of  
Pope Pius, largely polemical journal-  
ism which will perhaps be valuable  
reference, but is not a work of  
through analysis. Salvemini's  
splendid human being  
might be in danger of being  
as an angry old man of  
to read only this volume  
genitally on the rigid  
has a sense too rigid  
politics. There is no  
refutation here of  
A. J. P. Taylor's claim  
the Yugoslav  
fascism called  
a realist in the  
history of the

THE CERTAINLY is a crisis of  
of literature, due to a  
change of their func-  
tion. Ernst Fischer, the grand  
of Austrian Marxism, has  
a "but", he continues, "I do  
not think this crisis has anything  
to do with the work of art becoming  
increasingly..."

Another equivalent situation has  
been created by the theories of the  
ment of psychological labels in what  
left. On the one side, literature  
considered by our intellectual  
libraries as a weapon for  
and measured only by what  
attributes to that end; no more  
spiritual practice. Entertainment  
going have, so the argument  
value of their own; on the  
other, they tend to strengthen the  
system and are therefore to  
be ignored. Writers like Günter  
Grass and Heinrich Böll are dis-  
missed as figures, because they have  
not yet been prepared to  
submit to this discipline (though it might be  
said to prove this assumption in  
the case of Grass and Böll). On  
the other hand, the same young  
people who expect so much from  
literary art and literature as "a  
dialectical process, almost  
by that rare example of  
the same time an outstand-  
ing philosopher, sociologist, and  
critic: Theodor W. Adorno.  
He has written this article;  
he was commissioned to do  
it; and most books are consumed,  
i.e. read, without having been bought  
by the consumer; the readers have  
borrowed them from a friend or  
from the library, or received them  
as a present. There is no answer to  
this in my philosophy, and I never  
quite understood Adorno's answer.  
So all I can give is an account of  
my personal experience.

To consider the economic aspects  
of art and literature may have come  
as a shock to those for whom art  
had occupied the place of a lost reli-  
gion; I thought most of them had  
died long ago. Leaving them to their  
well-deserved rest, the observation  
that all creative products have their  
material basis, that they are not  
revolutionary, nor particularly  
Marxist, Marx and Engels had little  
to say about "art as a commodity".  
In the few passages of their works  
which touch on this question, the  
influence of money, "corrupting  
even the highest goods of mankind",  
is generally deplored—very much as  
Timon deplored it, the hero of  
Marx's and Engels's favourite play.  
Their attitude is quite touching, but  
it strikes me as disillusioned roman-  
ticism rather than sober materialism.  
Leaving aside other spheres of art,  
and concentrating on literature, it is

## RUDOLF LEONHARDT

Literary Editor of "Die Zeit"

The writer and  
his market

To the memory of Theodor W. Adorno

from that of a manufacturer, and  
when, more important still, the po-  
sition of the reader is not comparable  
with that of the ordinary consumer.  
Because, having a book, is the most  
a man can do, and "consume"  
it; and most books are consumed,  
i.e. read, without having been bought  
by the consumer; the readers have  
borrowed them from a friend or  
from the library, or received them  
as a present. There is no answer to  
this in my philosophy, and I never  
quite understood Adorno's answer.  
So all I can give is an account of  
my personal experience.

To consider the economic aspects  
of art and literature may have come  
as a shock to those for whom art  
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gion; I thought most of them had  
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that all creative products have their  
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which touch on this question, the  
influence of money, "corrupting  
even the highest goods of mankind",  
is generally deplored—very much as  
Timon deplored it, the hero of  
Marx's and Engels's favourite play.  
Their attitude is quite touching, but  
it strikes me as disillusioned roman-  
ticism rather than sober materialism.  
Leaving aside other spheres of art,  
and concentrating on literature, it is

impossible, during the Frankfurt  
Book Fair, to disregard its economic  
aspects; whatever else this may be, it  
is also a huge market, served by a  
world-wide industry. Once this has  
been noted, one must help feeling  
that it is a strange market, because  
the laws of supply and demand do  
not rule there in the way they do in  
other consumer industries.

To put it bluntly, though books  
are in great demand, directly as well  
as indirectly (television, films, news-  
papers, magazines could not live  
without them), and though there is  
no shortage of supply—there is little  
money in this thriving industry. If  
anybody working in it had devoted  
his knowledge, his intelligence and  
his energies to producing cars or

selling real estate, he would be much  
better off than he is.

I suspect this is true inter-  
nationally, though the only country  
I know about thoroughly is West  
Germany, where (as I read in the  
papers) a new millionaire is born  
every week. I don't think a single  
one of them owes his million to  
literature.

There are about twenty big Ger-  
man publishing houses which repre-  
sent, in the world of books, what  
Mercedes, Volkswagen and Opel  
represent in the world of cars. Their  
professional staff is, by German  
standards, notoriously underpaid  
(average salary 1,500 marks a  
month), with the exception of one  
or two senior employees who may  
earn as much as 5,000 marks (a  
salary which a top man in the motor  
industry would not look at). If the  
owner is a millionaire, as four or five  
of them are, he earned his million  
not so much as a publisher but as  
a printer (owner of a printing plant,  
printing all the forms and documenta-  
tion that bureaucracy demands in  
such large quantities).

There is no money in publishing  
books—though there are a few  
exceptions to confirm the rule. But  
publishers and their top employees  
are very well-off indeed compared  
with their authors. The situation of  
the German writer as a producer of  
consumer goods is similar to that of  
his English colleague, only worse.  
Having lived in both countries, and  
written three so-called "best-sellers"  
in England as *This Germany*, *War  
with the first Stein*, I am fairly  
sure of what I am talking about.

I could not have lived by my books.  
Each of them took me five years to  
write, and sold 100,000 copies at 20  
marks each. According to this gross  
reckoning, I sold 300,000 copies in  
fifteen years, which, altogether,  
earned me 6,000,000 marks. Instead of  
being six times a millionaire, I am  
nearly living as an employee of a pub-  
lishing firm (newspapers, notebooks),  
as so many of my friends and col-

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## Being and being said

BRICE PARAIN: *Petit métaphysique de la parole*. 173pp. Paris: Gallimard, 1981.

Brice Parain was, at the age of seventy, awarded the Prix des Critiques in June of this year, deserves to be better known in this country. His reputation in France rests mainly on his philosophical works (*Essai sur la mesure humaine*, *Essai sur le logos platonicien*, *Recherches sur la nature et les fonctions du langage*, *Sur la dialectique*), but he has also published several novels and a remarkable autobiography, *De fil en aiguille*, which appeared in 1960. One of the best expositions of Parain's thought remains the article which Camus wrote in 1944—an article, incidentally, which also is illuminating on Camus's own view of language.

During the past thirty years, in fact, Parain's main work has been a sustained meditation on the phenomenon of human speech and communication. At the same time he has remained remote from the main movements in linguistics in the sense that his approach is philosophical rather than historical, psychological, semantic or stylistic. He is not concerned with internal and structural, or external and anthropological,

problems of language. He focuses attention on the status of the words which we speak or write. We know ourselves and the world only through the intermediacy of language. If, therefore, the "truth" of our language is called in question we are near to having to affirm, as Gorgias did in opposition to Protagoras, that "everything is false".

Parain begins his latest essay, *Petit métaphysique de la parole*, by emphasizing the lack of adequate correspondence between the individual and his vocabulary. At the most general level we sense a dualism between our experience and the transformation of that experience into verbal expression. This may seem to be nothing more than evidence of the approximate nature of words, yet the conflict between human beings and their speech is more fundamental than this. There also exists a radical distinction—made notably by Kant—between "existence" and "conceived existence". No doubt this is what Parain has in mind when he writes:

"Parler consiste à transformer le monde de l'existence en un monde des mots, par conséquent le le premier dans sa manière propre d'être." And he adds later: "Le langage est un instrument de mort." This seems to amount to

saying: I verbalize, consequently the world is not, therefore I do not exist. Between "being" and "being said" there is a gap which, Parain claims, no dialectic can bridge.

Brice Parain is quick to draw certain moral consequences from this philosophical dualism and to point out the "doute terrible" extending beyond what we say or write. Imprecision, inadequacy, unintentional distortion and plain bad faith are inseparable from language. In one way or another we communicate what we do not know and know what we cannot capture in words. The dualism points up, in fact, a moral ambiguity in language which, because I can say anything and everything whether it "represents" me or not, enables me to use words as a means of convincing others—or myself—of the truth of my untruths. It is a short step from this to what Parain calls "le risque du caprice" or, more disquietingly, to "le goût de la domination". Indeed, these tendencies are encouraged by our word-intoxicated age in which

ce sont les paroles seules qui sont considérées: elles sont vengées, mesurées, pesées, peut-être adaptées ou recisées, les sentiments et les actions n'ayant qu'à s'y conformer, ou même étant négligées.

Language has become an all-pervasive modern servitude. In the sphere of language freedom involves an unrelenting struggle against the tyranny of words, a refusal to be subjugated by the verbal manifestation of ideologies and creeds.

In discussing the possible metaphysical consequences of the language/experience dualism, Parain expresses himself in more tentative terms although his own personal position is strongly suggested. He rejects the view that language is a human creation just as he discounts evolutionary and immanent explanations of its development. In a characteristic passage he writes:

La doctrine de l'évolution est séduisante parce qu'elle semble ne faire intervenir aucun élément surnaturel. Mais il faut tout de même admettre le passage du silence au langage pour terminer le récit. Quelque chose qui est le plus choquant pour l'esprit: Dieu ou cela?

Some pages later he argues that a direct correspondence between men and their language would alone convince him that man is the sole originator of his own verbal means. It could still be argued, of course, that they are to be explained, in a transcendental terms, by the theory of a collective origin of language. Parain comments: "Malgré tout, j'aime mieux Dieu que la société."

God is thus posited by Parain as a way of accounting for the dualism that exists between man and his language. Inevitably, just what is meant by "God" in this context is something requiring a good deal of clarification. We are dealing only with a hypothesis, although a strongly felt one on Parain's part. He pieces his own inquiry in context by suggesting, in more general terms, that we may be nearing the end of a period in philosophy dominated by the refusal of transcendence a period which has led to a widespread sense of ambiguity and manifold expressions of nihilism and despair. The belief in transcendence associated historically with the Middle Ages ended eventually with feelings of growing constraints and enslavement—grace, predestination, etc. Our own century, in its opposition to transcendence, has experienced a different kind of servitude—what Parain calls "des embarras contraires, ceux de la liberté". The value of this last essay lies in the fact that it points to one of the preliminary steps essential for any solution of our new dilemma. We must understand better the nature and significance of language at a moment when it—and through it many other things—threaten to control and then engulf us.

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## PHILIPPE SOLLERS

French writer, editor of *Tel Quel*

## A step on the moon

THE TITLE MAY CAUSE SOME surprise; little by little, simply, it should indicate how we might read, in the perspective of a mythology consistent with it, a text whose fertilizing power is already at work in the Western sector of our culture: a text whose effectiveness can only, through all its twists and turns, grow in importance and draw us further and further on. Jacques Derrida's *La Grammatologie*.

A word of warning, however: what readers will find here can be no more than an accompaniment to *La Grammatologie*, its brief yet infinitely fertile central argument, and the sheer obviousness which alone makes it difficult. The purpose of Derrida's book was to forestall misreadings of itself. But not only did misreading occur (as a result of over-hasty acceptance or of total incomprehension); it occurred, apparently, as it had always occurred before occurring in reality: that is to say in its own written proposition. Thus the written proposition of a reflection on writing could be seen to authenticate the specific block which, in any writing about writing, has the reader from knowledge of his writing works. Authentication of this sort does not give rise to mutual cancellation but to an increased necessity for destruction followed by construction.

If writing allows itself to be questioned, it also allows itself to remain unknown. *La Grammatologie* sets down theoretically, for the first time, an operation that is both complex and multiple, the space in which interrogation and ignorance connect a repression which in any case could not fit into the shape of a simple question of the kind: "What is writing?" That question has already been put and is already being answered; but already, inside the movement of that "what?", what is not and what is written is always more than what is being asked, always in excess of what is pre-asked in order for the question to be asked. The science of a history of writing is already formulated, but the

theoretical science of the inter-relatedness of writing and historicity still awaits formulation. It is a new science, the discovery of whose "field" has barely begun. This "field" is one which seems to call for "man" just as he "breaks cover". In a sense which is both very ancient and very modern: when he has separated himself from that cover and is on the point of dispensing with it altogether. The cause of this "differentness" had long fallen into oblivion, an oblivion which also was "necessary"; and this cause, taken together with the work of Freud, is the point of departure from which an "unheard-of" differential history becomes possible—and this is one of the lessons of Marxism, that first fundamental revolutionary science of an Earth that is not "enclosed" but, on a colossal scale, opened out. Look first at these printed characters: their appearance is not their reality.

One word more on the subject of our title: the moon, says Vandier

in *La Religion égyptienne*, was created by the Sun God to replace him during the night. It was Thoth whom Ra had chosen to act as replacement. Thoth, of course, was the God of writing and, in this capacity, as far as speech or rather the Word was concerned, the elusive, impalpable figuration of replacement, of usurpation. For thousands of years, then, and—the point is worth insisting on right up to the period of our immediate past, writing had thus been, in respect of the sun (the logos, word, reason, life, wealth, father that dead moon whose function was that of reflection only; that rocky mirror whose feminine, hidden face—its surface proper, contemporaneous with the formation of the earth, before Man—could only cause near, could only be seen, walked on—violated now and in the perspective of the future.

Man's first step on the moon, let us reflect on it carefully, is the step

another name for metaphysics and its verbal property rights. The science of writing has been "curbed by metaphor, metaphysics and theology".

Everything contributes to the view that what is called language could only have been, in its origin and in its end, one moment, one essential but clearly determined mode, one phenomenon, one aspect, one species of writing. It had only succeeded in ensuring that this was forgotten, in giving us the slip, by its participation in an adventure; just like the adventure itself.

The absolute control which speech has striven to achieve over writing—and this attempt at domination is irreducibly demonstrated in *La Grammatologie*—is, then, an exchange in the strictly economic, and in the last analysis, monetary, sense of the word. It was within writing itself, in a fictive "within" equivalent to its very capacity to represent a subject, that the permanent "satellization" of writing presumed to have itself.

This movement was carried out by one kind of writing (phonetic or alphabetical) which:

(1) forces writing into the service of "language in general" by freeing it from dependence on each particular language;

(2) makes of representation a function filtered by speech (with writing becoming a "system of signifiers whose signifieds are themselves signifiers-phonemes");

(3) allows the devising of a coinage as such "the movement of analytical abstraction in the circulation of arbitrary signs is exactly parallel to the movement by which a coinage is set up. Money replaces things by their signs. . . . It is for this reason that the alphabet can be said to be commercial. It must be included in the monetary movement of economic rationality. The critical description of money is a faithful reflection of all discourses on writing. . . . The forgetting of things is greatest with the use of those wholly abstract arbitrary



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signs; money and phonetic writing";

(4) guarantees the transcendental value of conscious subjectivity;

(5) ensures the predominance of "poetry". Before writing, the line of poetry, one might say, was of the order of a spontaneous engraving, a pre-literary writing. Then the philosopher, intolerant of poetry, must have taken writing literally—that is to say the dominance of grammar and of the word.

At this point we reach that which breaks away both from writing in the narrow sense and from painting. On the one hand, it will not, from this point on, be possible to conceive of writing as painting; painting is now seen to be what, with the ideological repression of writing, is gradually to become an object of speculation, a fetish for a whole culture. On the other hand, in the "dumbing-up" of writing by the letter-system (Freud was to take the first steps towards unmasking the effects of this), what is covered over (or pressed down into the unconscious) is clearly "that writing which takes place within and before speech"—a reality unthinkable for speculative philosophy and classical reason (from Plato to Hegel, with Rousseau as a stage on the way), both of them impotent in the face of writing in the broad sense. Look at these characters: their inscription both is and is not what you understand by these words.

Now, however, metaphysics is dropping out of the race. For Derrida it corresponds to the tremendous development of productive forces and the closely supervised installation of these inside capitalism and its final stage, the imperialism of state monopoly capitalism, the last stage before the transition to socialism and communism. It no longer gives any response therefore to the surge of the new forces, destined to transform the economy of human societies from top to bottom. It no longer keeps its sphere of influence even if it does seem to have overrun the planet and, indeed, space: nor does it control its own language, even though it still believes itself capable of imposing its own way of speaking and thinking on the general function of meaning. The split occurs here at the very base of its ideological barrier: the modes of meaning in their over-determined state.

In this sense it may be said that logocentric metaphysics had "since the beginning" seeded within it two elements of irreducible externality: mathematics and "literature". Two outside elements located inside the vocal security of "within"; two elements which escaped, by definition, the sign of divinity, and divinity as sign. In fact, a non-phonetic science which was, with increasing difficulty, bold back, penned in by a phonetic ideology; and "between the two", the constantly moving two-way process which connects them. The result—a more and more comprehensive defeat for representation; but also an attack on its resources; if it is true that all proto-writing is rooted in an act of violence against the "object pursued", excluded and pursued in logic and economics just as it was on the wild, dripping walls of the caves at Lascaux. From another direction, the circumscribing of the world comes about with the sudden arrival of China on the scene of history. Writing is to speech what China is to Europe.

Thus it is that the rapid, stoic development of linguistics takes its place in this process of dissolution: "Western metaphysics occurs as the predominance of a linguistic form." One pivot acquires more and more importance, by incarnating the essential mortality of the letter: the noun. But "non-phonetic writing denotes the noun." It describes relations, not names. Here we must point out the work of subversion already accomplished by *La Grammatologie* in all those comparisons of the social sciences which are regulated by the linguistic ideology. It is worth dwelling for a moment on the much-troubled ground of this regulation in Saussure, for example. "Literary

language bolsters still further the unwarranted importance of writing. Because of this, writing invests itself with an importance to which it is not entitled." This is one of the prime prejudices of the theory of writing as a derivative form, a theory which finds mechanical expression in the work of a few linguists in the work of an initial theoretical exercise which might mean, might for him visibly mean, death. Thus Martinet: "We learn to speak before learning to read. Writing backs up speaking, never the reverse."

And so writing is annexed, and limited to the function of a dictation-in-the-future, cut off from its own spatial open-endedness, from its scenic relations with the space of the unconscious, from all of which it emerges, in what has been called "literature", painting, music, dance, theatre, and some way behind them, and yet ahead of them if the movement has indeed gone right through them: in psychoanalysis, that "language is a species of writing." If language was not already a form of writing, no derived "notation" would be possible, and the classic problem of the relation between speech and writing could not arise. An image of writing takes the place of writing in the name of the speech which occupies its place.

Thus Derrida can put forward the view that "if there is anything in literature which cannot be reduced to voice, to epics or to poetry, it can be recuperated only by rigorously isolating this locus of the play of form and of the substance in which graphic expression is achieved." In this sense he is right to stress the importance of *glossolalia* which, more successfully than phonology, establishes the premises for a recognition of the specificity of writing: "Ink as a substance has not been granted by linguists the attention they have so lavishly paid to air" (H. J. Ulssall). Only replace, here as everywhere else, *substance* by *matter* and we come close to the fundamental question now facing all those who work in the field of meaning.

Of linguistics in general one might say this: that while there is no case for denying its necessity and its coherence (quite the reverse), it remains true that, as a science, it rests on metaphysical prejudices, whose dead hand is perceived as an increasingly oppressive burden the more linguistics is called on to become the "social science" par excellence. So it is with its distinctions between "form" and "substance", "content" and "expression", and so on. So it is with its use in ethnography, psychoanalysis, "literary" work. What linguistics calls "writing" has merely a "family" connexion with what *La Grammatologie* calls by the same name. The question then is: "Why does the entire 'writing' still cover this x, this virtual unknown quantity which is becoming so different from what has hitherto been called 'writing'?" But this is to indicate the locus of an upheaval and the matter out of which it forges itself in its "differentness", a dual locus, at once occupied and blank, marked and unmarked; its spacing, that locus of differential, strategic "time-scales" in which repetition and intertextuality reappear forever demonstrating that "writing is other than the subject" (Saussure): "Language is not a function of the speaking subject."

The "trace-thinking" to which *La Grammatologie* introduces us is no more a phenomenology of writing than it is a phenomenology of the sign: it starts, and grows, in and through the metaphysics of meaning carried and raised to white heat; in that zone where every concept breaks temporarily loose from its place in the chain, and is caught up in non-contradiction and non-negation, the simple non-temporality of the unconscious as a language that has always-been-writing itself. It is this zone where "dreams get dreamt", where dreaming plucks its camp in the speech of that language which is refused to be what it is called by writing, and which means that it can only be what it is by falling away, into the unconscious, this language being nothing, without that evidence, and that cause, which we are living

under its law. In the secession, in the mechanical deployment of this evidence there then appears the "grammatical structure" (discourse) of form in language, but as well as that or simultaneously with it its written base, its bundles of distinguishing marks. Trace-thinking is thus "anterior" as a "differentness" to the cultivated distinction between nature and culture, animality and humanity. &c.: not anterior to nature itself, to animality itself, but to that part of them which can be tolerated if speech is to be possible.

Trace thinking, in this analysis, is fundamentally materialist. For if materialism, as we hope to show in detail, has never been defined except by its other idealism, the materialist break-through occurs in a hitherto unexpected direction. This remoulding topen-and-closed with Platonism, closed by and in Hegel, it is held, opens up to those frontiers of science which are not ideologically enslaved: it is a remoulding which slides easily into an unlimited future and really does "come from" the unlimited. In this way, *La Grammatologie* allows us to see this historical and logical era of the logos as a "sublimation of the trace" (founded on a particular time-scale, on a consecutiveness the linearity of phonology which knows nothing of the signified in its ideal design. Philosophy, seen in this light, is and has been the form of discourse which is paralysed by the line, and which confuses the trace with the horizon. The word "history" must now have two meanings: one philosophical (etymological), and rigorously limited; the other extra-philosophical, no longer restrictive of history. And what is formed in this way is the *traces* of history as writing."

The historical process which is writing then breaks away from the

mere representation of history, with its vested interest in not examining the conditions of that representation. In other words, it is to history in its own way that the question of writing is put in its displacement, its shift of centre. The necessary shift of centre follows on the becoming-legible of non-Western systems of writing. We are more and more fully aware that history is made up of different time-scales which should be dealt with multi-dimensionally, and not projected together on to the same plane. This linear projection corresponds to a form of reason which fails to take in either the Freudian unconscious or the reality of historical materialism and in particular the importance of a decisive mode of production the Asiatic. In the words of Godelier: "Modern archaeology has amply demonstrated that it was not 'civilization' which was born in Greece, but only the West, one of its particular forms, though one which was finally to dominate it. From the point of view of the dynamics of productive forces, the appearance of the State and of the class societies which Marx and Engels grouped together in 'the Asiatic mode of production' bears witness... to a great leap forward in productive forces."

China was more advanced than Europe until the beginning of the sixteenth century: do we always have this in mind? Do we not constantly forget that we live under a capitalist mode of production, the capitalist mode which imposes its own time-scale which subverts it? And which does so by means of a language of reproduction whose very raison d'être must be this voluntary failure to apprehend writing correctly, this concealment of it within a form of speech which is immediate, present and which in the West buttresses feudal religious state and bourgeois capitalist democracy, the aristocratic hierarchy and utopian socialism, idealism and mechanistic materialism? From Plato to Rousseau, from

Rousseau to Lévi-Strauss, can we not see within what Derrida calls "ethnographic obsession", the same line of blindness? Is not the conception of language as an instrumentally a failure of all forms of thought which bow the knee before this very reason?

And yet, from as early as the eighteenth century it becomes possible to ask out the eventual failure of this, one of the most prodigious re-visions ever attempted by a civilization: by metaphysics that "eventuality" system opposed to the threat posed by writing, and "the anaemia ultimately reiterated" which latter had indeed to hear.

Real threat in the eighteenth century is writing. It is a threat neither ideal nor confined; it brings into play, in a single historical system, the projects for new ideographies, the theory of non-European systems of writing, or at least the huge advances in techniques of *deconstruction*: in a word, the whole idea of a *general* theory of language and of writing, going all these pressures, a war is needed. "Hegelianism" will be its most notable battle-scar.

The question of writing is fraught with violence, a violence proper to that which is inflicted on it to an externality. The violence inflicted against writing in return for the threat of violence it embodies in a denied denial of sexuality: it is no secret that marks with the name make the contradictory change of one of the bourgeois revolution, from "trace-thinking" ("the muffled two-fold movement of duration and retention"), a movement of "sentinel adventure" (Derrida) from "pre-literary writing" to "will-o'-the-wisp" which appears in speech supposedly without writing, whole economy gambles with it in an attempt to protect the thinking head" which believed it could transcend itself from within: a fact, within an empty phallus which re-encounters with a supreme voice a form of understanding raised above time. The phallus of control over the trace and the systems which, more directly than most, derive from it mathematics, notation, metric systems of writing, gradually collapsing.

For the moment, we are at the stage of the opening-up of a field of unprecedented size, the field created by the loosening of the "vice" of the linear (top) model, of a rationality which is necessarily enslaved. The existence of such a field involves us in recognizing the limitations of phonocentricity including its internal limitations.

What might be heralded, then, by trace-thinking is of course the long climb through all the political, juridical and linguistic systems to the complex economy. Unintentionally as well as as recruited, with determinations; and the "forcing" of the metaphysical barrier, the breaches in which the "social science" ideology is desperately trying to stop up. The trace, the same sign: lines, veins in stone, in wood, constellations, marks of birds' feet, tattoos, designs on reptile shells, and also "literature": this character is also to be found in the expression approximately translated by "great proletarian cultural revolution" might then designate the object of this enormous new science of grammatology.

Such a science would, on the one hand, abolish the monogamous illusion, strengthen the basic equipment of deconstruction, progress in the understanding of all situations, in the part of "deconstruction" (the "trace" gradually loses out the exact term: dog of those great, freedom, and peoples have not stopped writing, painting, engraving and drawing. On

the other hand, it would isolate and identify the unconscious processes of our apparently stable and transparent systems, develop research in fields where the predominance of the sign has never been completely achieved: psychoanalysis, the text formerly called "literary". This is a radical scientific programme, even if, as Derrida says, "thinking about writing cannot be contained within one science, nor even within one epistemological study-group. It cannot be satisfied with so much or so little". A start has been made from many directions on the programme, but as a whole, it is a programme essentially of the future. By before it can be brought about, we must work and it will be an unrelenting harsh struggle for the overthrow of a fundamental prejudice, one that is doubtless as tenacious as that of the unpossessiveness of the "eternal nature" of the capitalist mode of production before Marx and Lenin, or that of the omnipotence of the conscious mind before Freud: the prejudice of "writing as an instrumentalist or technical concept inspired by the phonetic model, which in fact can fit it only for those who are victims of a teleological illusion."

Whether it is science (theoretical and technical or modern "art", mathematics or painting, music or the most adventurous texts in our culture) everything lines up against this concept, or pseudo-concept, isolating and destroying it and, with it, a particular conception of the confidently garrulous Subject. Antonin Artaud wrote, in 1937, in Mexico:

Was I not told, back in the mountains, that those scattered geometrical figures were not scattered but in order and that they were the signs of a language based on the form of breathing itself at the point where it emerges as sound. In three mountains encircled with more shapes than there are gods on the temple walls of India and which watch the passing of men with lead-bells, men wrapped in capes which also bear in them embroidered triangles, crosses, dots, circles, tears, flashes of lightning.

Or again:

What emerges from my spleen at my liver took the form of letters from some ancient and mysterious alphabet which had been chewed in some giant mouth; one that was horribly repressed, proud, unreluctant, jealous of its invisibility; and the signs were being swept about in every direction while I appeared to be climbing, though out alone.

When Artaud, then, writes these sentences, do we not find ourselves at the nearest possible point to those few un-gravitational dramatic achievements (Lautrémont, Mallarmé, Joyce, Pound) which for a hundred years now have been pulling the force called "writing" out of its fixed path? Let us listen, too, to Georges Bataille: "To write is to go in search of chance. Chance animates the smallest parts of the universe" and then ask ourselves if what takes place between these lines could ever be more than a teleological and linguistic service mark of "literature".

The real question, on the contrary, would be: what unprecedented experience do these lines hint at? Perhaps metaphysics, theology, speculative philosophy and the "social sciences" (which borrow from the others the same basic repression) may after all have been no more than other names for that pulling-back, that retreat, from the shift to direction, the "differentness" of the "trace" and the mutations and transformations it effects. The resistance to it can then be seen always to have fallen (and still to be falling) short and to one side of the question of writing. Short, and to one side, of what nevertheless is being written as it reveals before our blind eyes. Finally, back:

The word "literature", conceived as a march, is an abbreviation so powerful that it has gradually brought to its trail, perhaps indeed the intention was there from the beginning—an abbreviation of thinking which appears as a trace, a line and which is in one way or another of its kind, and is one way or

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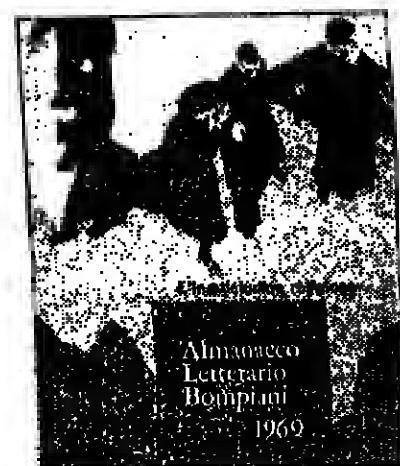


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HANS MAYER (Editor): *Goethe im XX. Jahrhundert*. 441pp. Hamburg: Wexner. DM 26.  
GEORG LUKACS: *Goethe and his Age*. Translated by Robert Anchor. 280pp. Merlin Press. 38s.

Goethe, said Nietzsche, was not just a great and good man, but a culture. The more simple, quantitative sense in which this is true is emphasized yet again by this book. The breadth of Goethe's involvements, "interests" would be too pale a word positively denudes a range of variously qualified commentators, while the depth and fruitfulness of his involvement in each separate area may well challenge the attention of its most eminent modern specialists. Thus Willmott wrote on the aesthetics of Goethe's Italian journey. Heisenberg on the relation of his light theories to modern physics, and the escaped classicist Schudewaldt on the wealth of classical allusion and inspiration in Goethe's work. The result of bringing these essays together is that we see Goethe as the chess-champion playing several simultaneous boards—and, behind the tactics in each game, the higher coherent strategy, what Gottfried Benn in his essay on Goethe and the natural sciences calls "the compactness of indissolubly entwining parts".

For Benn, and even more for the others here represented, Goethe is a challenge in a different sense to writers: they must retrace and contemplate the detail and the import of his work in an attempt to come to terms with its vastness of achievement. In their respective genres and particular preoccupations he has been there before them and cannot be brushed aside as a mere figure of the past; the German writer has to live with Goethe and his consequences in a way no other literature has quite experienced. He will tend to find or make himself a place in one of Goethe's many mansions; striving to encompass the whole, he will at most illuminate a part through the medium of his own experience, saying at least as much about himself in the process and illustrating Goethe's cohesive power as a unifying tradition. Thus, with *Werther* as his pretext, Thomas Mann muses on the sensational first success which establishes a youthful writer, and on the way it is related to his time; Hofmannsthal on Goethe's dramatic work where it borders on opera; Heise on the *Bildungsroman* as a vehicle for lyricism and the modern adaptation of a mature culture. Add to these the best essays of recent academic literary critics and of free-lance intellectuals like Adorno and Benjamin, and the mixture is a most acceptable volume—*Goethe im XX. Jahrhundert* is a good deal more than the sum of its parts.

Georg Lukács's *Goethe and sein Zeitalter* is the latest of the Merlin press offerings from his work, this time in a less distinguished translation than some earlier efforts, which wisely stood back from the words and transmitted the sense and the shape of the argument. Lukács' best friend would presumably not rate him much of a stylist, but at his best his writing is plain and workmanlike. Here it becomes unfortunately rather than translation of phrases rather than translation of phrases which brings us to that unhappy birth of neither-German-nor-English, "spoke past one another". For even the German original however will not account for the trying incoherence of "Young Goethe" (für "the young Goethe"), and even "young Goethe" (not, apparently, a misprint). There are misreadings of single words: "ideally" for "ideally", "elementary" for "elementary", the usual renouncing "ideological" for "ideological". Also of general sense, most delightfully when a mistaken word-order parodies by overlooking Lukács' point of view of society. Wagner presents the tragic fate of a girl seduced in accordance with the spirit of the age.

A view of society and of history is of course what we are really

concerned with in this as in every work of Lukács. This is what he has in mind when he speaks of a "concrete" analysis: not, as the English reader might suppose, something which is a matter of concrete (i.e. empirical) proof. The demands of the historical view that something must have been the case will always override any demands that it should be demonstrable by evidence—e.g. textual. Thus Lukács tells us that Goethe left Weimar for Italy not for the personal reasons so massively documented by his letters and diaries of the period (reasons which Lukács oversimplifies before dismissing them) but

because his attempt to reform the Duchy of Weimar society, according to the principles of the Enlightenment, foundered in the face of the resistance of the court, the bureaucracy, and Karl August.

Evidence? An opinion quoted from Mehring, and "researches" of Lukács's own which, in 1947, "could not be set forth here". They have not, to this reviewer's knowledge, been set forth since. But such simply must have been Goethe's motivation if he is to have been the positive figure he must be supposed, occupying the historical position he must be supposed to occupy. (Why he agreed to return to Weimar two years later, on the understanding he would not be involved in the same amount of administrative business, is a mystery left quietly sleeping.) Goethe becomes "concrete", not as an evoked personality whose intellectual traces are there in works and documents we can check, but as a "pre-revolutionary apostle of the Enlightenment"—what we might be inclined to call an historical abstraction. The historical sweep of Lukács's argument, at first sight so impressive, has a paradoxically narrowing effect when one is thus brought to doubt the reality of the historical detail out of which it is built up.

Even his stated promise, that "in contemporary life it is no longer possible, as it was in antiquity, to derive all the determinants of thought and poetic creation from the individual human being"—a wholly justified reminder of the social causes and connections of literature—need not lead to the hackneyed conclusions he derives from it, nor (above all) to that total exclusion of personal factors which makes his sophistication so often seem naive. It certainly ought not to make of *Werther* solely, or even predominantly, a "popular-humanistic revolt... one of the most important revolutionary expressions of bourgeois ideology in the preparatory period of the French Revolution". Nor, surely, does the novel's success "show what the inhabitants of other countries at a more advanced stage of capitalism must have experienced immediately in Werther's fate: *Tina res agit*". What is the evidence of such an awareness and in such terms?

Most people thought it was a tragic love novel; even Lukács admits it is a love novel, though understandably this is to have a very preliminary stage of interpretation. In saying what it more essentially is, he comes revealingly into conflict with Goethe, whose words to Eckermann he quotes: "Thwarted happiness, hampered activity, ungratified desires: these are not the intimacies of a particular period, but those of every single human being." To which Lukács opposes, with undisturbed aplomb, a familiarly "concrete" abstraction:

Goethe exaggerated here the "timeless" character of *Werther*; he concealed the fact that the individual conflict in which the significance of his novel lies is just his conflict between personality and society in bourgeois society. This direct disagreement of author and critic pinpoints the crucial issue. What Lukács is doing is not merely personifying Goethe's thought, adding to account for his writing, or *Werther*, but any substance to the concepts of "life", "experience", "society", which is and remains the basis of a particular form of society.

Fendal, bourgeois, capitalist society have been necessarily and peculiarly responsible for human misery. Hence the overriding literary criterion that the great writer is he who grasps this in his work and thereby reveals a "forward-pointing" consciousness. But if Goethe did, as Lukács holds, reach this "highest perspective attainable to the bourgeois consciousness", what of his disclaimers, the categorical statement that Werther's fate was not a matter of historical development? Was Goethe not conscious of his own consciousness?

If all that Goethe meant in the quoted words to Eckermann was that, whatever the factors which cause tragedy, the poet still has to concern himself with the tragedy as such, then he and his critics would only be adopting different perspectives. This would merely show up the known truth that, unlike poets, Marxist critics are concerned with literature as a social self-mirror. But Goethe was consciously adopting a higher perspective, asserting that the tragic events which concern the poet are constant features of life, whatever the society. To say then that the tragedy of *Werther* is due to the late feudal society in which it occurs, or the tragedy of Werther in the bourgeois society in which it occurs would be not just a simplification but a form of the fallacy *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. To accept it, one would also have to accept the other tacit premise of all Lukács's arguments: the belief in a society whose nature would not produce or allow these or other tragic conflicts. This implied ideal of a withering away of tragedy to match the withering away of the state may once, as the predictive part of Lukács's historical framework, have seemed an asset. It is surely now fast becoming a liability.

Lukács's stimulus-value is still great. He puts before us suggestions no one else is likely to make (like the parallel between the mortality of Faust II and that of Hegel's philosophy of history). He tirelessly forces on our attention historical and social contexts and connections which, dogmatic though they may be, compel a response. His very persistence and conviction carry a certain power. As if Johann Mann said wryly of his meeting with Lukács: "All the time he was speaking, he was right".

## File copies

Heinrich Heine—Polar: *Suhrkamp: Bibliothek*. Edited by Siegfried Unseld. 507pp. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. DM 24.

Heinrich Heine was an accomplished letter-writer and an even more meticulous self-censor of what should be published. We may doubt whether he would have let his correspondence with Peter Suhrkamp appear, and equally whether Suhrkamp, as a shrewd publisher, would have countenanced it. Was there no better way to honour Suhrkamp on the tenth anniversary of his death? No general selection of his correspondence in the lines of the splendid monument to Kurt Wolff which was published in 1968? Heine and Suhrkamp exchanged largely humdrum business and personal letters; in the mass of them, repetition and hardly of interest even to those professionally interested in publishing (all others, Dr. Unseld admits, may find their patience strained). Page follows page of new impressions, free copies, licensed editions, translations, of copyright, thank-you-for-the-proofs and royalty percentages. Such insights as there are—into the publishing situation in immediately post-war Germany, into Suhrkamp's side of the post-war split with Hermann Fischer in the character-contrast of author and publisher, or into the workings of two sick and aging men—could have fitted into a longer, principled. The baggage of literature is long enough without unnecessary additions.

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BANKS, IT MIGHT BE SAID, prefer granting loans against "pure" paper—for them printed paper is "devalued", and has not good security. This is the general point of departure, common to all book publishers of the so-called Western world. The national differences are considerable at any time as regards the possibility of transforming this devalued commodity into a profit-making product.

The American publishing industry deviates the furthest from traditional European conceptions. The vast output of the large number of big publishers is served by a distribution network of only the some number of bookshops—about 1,400—as in West Germany: there are virtually no bookshops outside the big cities. Leonard Shatzkin once referred to the American book trade as that "tragedy" played out between the publisher, who sits upon mountains of books, and the man in the giant country who would gladly buy them. Theretail trade in hardbacks amounts to a mere 25 per cent of book sales in the United States; the annual output which the 2,500 American publishers offer a book-buying public of about 10 million people is approximately 30,000 titles. This comparatively high proportion of book-buyers, and the equally high average of titles bought per head—in fact seven books a year—is therefore reached by other methods: by mail-order, library sales, and paperbacks.

Above all, it is reached by paperbacks, which are brought to the consumers by a distribution system separate from the retail trade and play a vital role. So much so as to have turned publishing practice upside down: originally conceived to capitalize on subsidiary rights, paperback publishers, like the New American Library, Dell, or Pocket Books, are now taking authors under contract for original publications because they can pay substantially more than a hardback publisher—

## FRITZ RADDATZ

Editor of Rowohlt, Hamburg

# The future of international publishing

and they also bring out the hook in hardback. Norman Mailer's *An American Dream*, for instance, had its beginnings in a combined offer from *Esquire* and a paperback publisher; in addition, the commission for Mailer's book on the moon landing, with an advance of a million dollars, itself came from *Life* magazine while the book will be issued by the Time-Life owned publishers Little, Brown.

The colossal advances of American

paperback publishers—\$500,000 for Kathleen Winsor's *Wanderers Eastward*, *Wanderers West*, \$500,000 for Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, \$300,000 for Sammy Davis Jr.'s autobiography, and \$350,000 for Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*—can be explained by the tremendous power of paperbacks; as can the phenomenon of mergers between paperback and hardback publishers—like Simon & Schuster and Pocket Books, because the latter's present

owner and president, Leon Shinkin, had not perhaps appreciated that his high paperback advances were sustaining other hardback publishers (as were the royalties, which occasionally amount to 15 per cent of the published price). A similar development is taking place in Europe—with regard to periodicals and hardback publishers; many periodicals, for instance, *The Observer*, have to pay publishers—who own the subsidiary rights and often use the income from

them to finance the publication in book form—so much for pre-publication serialization that they are now setting up their own publishing houses.

As statistics show, this paperback inflation is at the expense of serious literature, which is dependent upon the recommendation and intercession of the bookseller, and which is now scarcely able to assert itself in the form of bound volumes. In America the size of editions remains almost as small as in West Germany, with its far smaller population, which is why American publishers even consider publishing new literary titles simultaneously in paperback. A more serious consequence may be deduced from the general turning away from fiction, both in reading habits and in publishers' output. The cue was given by Leon Shinkin when he said in an interview: "The education industry will soon be the number one industry in America." While the vice-president of R.C.A. stated, when his radio network was buying the celebrated Madison Avenue publishers Random House: "The publishing industry and electronics are logical partners in the development now before us, which will operate in the field of education in particular." In the same way the giants Time-Life and General Electric were combined to form a super-firm: the General Learning Corporation, of which George Haller, one of General Electric's vice-presidents, at the same time became head. At the American Publishers and Publishers Congress in May, 1966, Mr. Heller stated: "We are not interested in the book business, we are mainly interested in the information business. That is the 'in' word today."

This development in fact began with the publication, for the centenary, in September, 1965, of a facsimile edition of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures Underground* by University Microfilms of Michigan, in a first impression of 50,000 copies. The owners of this firm are the Xerox Corporation. In London during the

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Second World War the Xerox Corporation, with the aid of the Rockefeller Foundation, recorded through University Microfilms all the most important English manuscripts, Shakespeare first editions, and other documents of literature and cultural history on microfilm, so that if they were destroyed they would at least be preserved in facsimile. And so this priceless collection of about 30,000 books dating from 1475-1700 could for the first time be moved from place to place thanks to the process developed by Xerox. Meanwhile Xerox bought a number of other American publishing houses as well—among others, the famous Westview University Press for \$52 million; just as I.B.M. bought publishers like Science Research Associates.

The most interesting thing about all this so far as Europe is concerned is the fact that this development precludes official subsidy, because under Title II of the U.S. Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, for instance, only \$101 million is indirectly available as purchasing funds for school and university libraries; Title III grants a further \$100 million, and the so-called Higher Education Bill provides another \$250 million. It is not therefore surprising that the former United States Commissioner of Education, Francis Keppel, was made president of the General Learning Company. Already in 1966 the director of Princeton University Press, Herbert S. Bailey, wrote in an article:

"The development of cheaper copying machines is still in its infancy. By means of this new technology long-distance copying will soon be feasible. Then a book or essay will be placed in a machine in New York and a copy of it will appear in Chicago or California, transmitted across a network of cables linking all large libraries and bookshelves. It can be imagined that a revolutionary development immediate long-distance lending facilities from one single central library, such as the Library of Congress perhaps, will be for all libraries. Only a single copy of any particular book would be necessary for the library requirements of a whole country, and the enormous expense of constant cataloguing and keeping records would thus be spared. To save space this single copy could, for instance, be kept on microfilm in the National Library, solely for reproduction on demand."

This American big-business approach to the publishing industry is, strangely enough, to be found above all in France. While Eric de Bellogue, one of the partners of the London stockbroking firm of Bockmaster and Moore, stayed in a talk given to the Society of Bookmen last July (and published in the *Bookman* in August), that "U.K. book publishing is a growing industry with an admirable record of uninterrupted annual increases in turnover since the end of the war", he was forced to admit at the same time that English publishing was almost entirely in the hands of private families and that there were "only six companies that are predominantly engaged in book publishing and whose ordinary shares are listed on the London Stock Exchange: Associated Book Publishers, A. & C. Black, Cassell, Collins, Penguin, and Routledge and Kegan Paul (not counting Pergamon). (Though he did mention that "scope is very much greater" with "companies" where book publishing is one of a number of interests—such as the British Printing Corporation, Granada, the International Publishing Corporation, S. Pearson, the Thomson Organization, and Tilling.) Despite a widely differing profit rate—about 5.5 per cent for Cassell as against 25 per cent for Longmans—the conservative structure of English publishing has been preserved, not least through extremely favourable export opportunities which Sir Eric Roll, Chairman of the Book Development Council, also stressed (in his essay "The Writer in the Export Market", *TLJ*, July 24) when he estimated the rise in exports over the past sixteen years at 300 per cent—exactly three times the overall British export figure. These export prospects—gooder by far, of course, than those of French or German publishers—must be set against the fact that English publishers on average earn less from subsidiary rights (often a mere 10 per

cent on pre-publication sale to a newspaper, while a German publisher usually demands at least 40 per cent of all subsidiary rights). This is again why Continental authors normally have no agents but fix up contracts directly with their publishers (thus avoiding the need to pay 10 per cent agents' fees).

Even in England, however, only paperback seem to be satisfying a real public demand for buying and reading books. As Peter Owen stated in an article in June this year:

"My firm's list of adequate book-sellers in the U.K. consists of only thirty shops. This number compares shamefully with the European bookshops who stock English books—indeed, there are almost as many shops carrying a good selection in Holland, Switzerland or the Scandinavian countries."

Mr. Owen also states that 80 per cent of the total hardback output sold "in the British Isles" is to public libraries.

Things are very different in France. The French publishing business seems, by comparison, monopolized and faultlessly organized, whereby the major share of the total output—in fact, roughly two-thirds—is concentrated in three groups comprising a total of twenty-five firms. One of these groups is Hachette, to which the publishers Grasset, Fayard, Stock, and the art publishers Editions du Chêne and the leading paperback publishers, Le Livre de Poche, all belong. With the exception of Stock, Hachette also distributes the total output of these firms and, under license, the whole Gallimard output. Gallimard is the second highest publishing giant in France, with an output of about 450 new titles every year and a turnover of about 25 million francs. Gallimard may be regarded as the focal point of French literature, publishing more or less everything—from Proust, Gide and Jostandau to Camus, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Celine and Aragon—that has rank and reputation in France.

Denel, Mercure de France and Table Ronde also belong to Gallimard. In the case of Denel, Gallimard, in avoiding possible complications with Hachette, have set up a distribution system of their own through which various other publishers are being distributed—such as the independent patrons of the *nouveau roman*, Editions de Minuit, Gallimard's imposing patrician house at 5 rue Sebastien-Bottin, right next to the Hotel Pont-Royal (where Hemingway was a regular customer in the bar and where Henry Miller and James Baldwin still stay whenever they are in Paris; both the Deux Magots and the Flore are only a couple of minutes' walk away) cannot of course be compared with the third large publishing group, Presses de la Cité, which since 1924 has been owned by Sigurd Nielsen, a Dane resident in Paris. This firm—said to have direct connections with the powerful banking group Union Financière de Paris, and who publish, among other things, the successful paperback thriller "Fleuve Noir"—has an annual turnover of more than 100 million francs, as a result of which—and in contrast with the other firms—the shares of Presses de la Cité are traded on the Bourse. In 1965 they were quoted at 471 francs, for a face value of 50 francs.

The most recent venture of this, the fastest expanding of all French publishers (650 titles a year) has caused a sensation in France, though its success remains to be seen: the powerful German book club Bertelsmann, having already merged with a Spanish publisher, is now moving into the French market. Bertelsmann has made an agreement with Presses de la Cité, on a fifty-fifty basis, to launch a book club in France in the grand manner, under the name of Euro-Livre and Euro-Disque for gramophone records—which will have a German general manager, Norbert Pressner, and a French co-director, Pierre Gruenais. Besides the publishers belonging to the Nielsen group, such as Plon, Julliard, Bourgois, Perrin & Co., five publishers outside the group have already agreed to have their books distributed by this new organization. Clearly, they have here for the first time a vigorous attempt, making use of all the latest management methods, to reach that

51 per cent of the French population who, as the adept and energetic Paris publisher Robert Laffont once said, never enter a bookshop. In France, unlike other countries (Soviet Union 30 per cent, Great Britain 28 per cent, United States 26 per cent), only six per cent of the adult population uses public libraries (and even this six per cent only reads on average half a book a year, so clearly there is still a large untapped market, and a good chance of success in offering books by other than the conventional methods of distribution. Pierre Gruenais has commented: "People are sceptical but so they were about bringing Coca-Cola to France or Renault's Dignity." Bertelsmann's strongest competitors, the Deutsche Bucherbund of Stuttgart, have already come to a similar arrangement with the Club Français du Livre.

The current state of German publishing is the most complex and involved of all. In Germany, as in the past, a good deal of ideology intrudes, and statistics alone cannot give an adequate picture. The annual output of the approximately 2,500 West German publishers, whose distribution is provided for by about 8,000 bookshops, amounts to about 30,000 titles. These figures can easily be reduced if they are restricted to serious publishers (1,500) and to bookshops (2,800) which are members of the official trade association, the Buchhändlerbörseverein. With 23 per cent, literature has the major share—as against 3.3 per cent for medicine, 0.9 per cent for mathematics, and 7.8 per cent for economics and social sciences.

Other statistics, such as the high proportion of translations, can be explained by this preponderance of literature in the annual output—in which marked contrast to the situation in America. One book in eight published in West Germany in 1966 was a translation; three-quarters of the translations published were from the English—29.2 per cent from the United States and 27.2 per cent from England; the next language was French with 17.9 per cent, and then Russian with only 3.2 per cent. A comparison between the books offered at the Leipzig and Frankfurt Book Fairs of September 1968 reveals significant differences. The special number of the trade journal for the Leipzig autumn fair contained ninety-six German and foreign publishers, of which almost half (forty-two) were purely technical publishers whose output is aimed at "meeting the challenge of the technological revolution". At the West German book fair at Frankfurt a total of 806 German and foreign publishers were represented—of which the largest group (196) were literary publishers. Characteristically, the East German trade journal begins with the technical publishers—some of whom are already publishing in other languages, including Tibetan, Urdu, Yoruba and Chinese. Works translated from Russian make up two-thirds of the new translations published; and while the average number of "literary" books per publisher in West Germany is fifteen new titles a year, in East Germany it is a mere five.

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## Death of the blues

PAUL OLIVER: *The Story of the Blues*. 176pp. Barrie and Rockliff. The Cresset Press. £3

The blues, says Mr. Oliver in the final section of an extraordinary piece of scholarship.

shows every evidence of cultural decline: the ascendancy of formal mannerism over content, the roteness of the blues, the loss of its physical and instrumental signs of an art form in its final stages.

The assessment is true enough when applied to the staged frenzy of say, Lindy Hop: truer still of the white "ethnic" singers who have imitated, modified and debased the music of Muddy Waters and the poignant twelve-bar structures of Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday.

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## Racine without tushery

AN RACINE: *Complete Plays*. Translated by Samuel Solomon. Vol. 1 440pp. Vol. II 459pp. New York Random House. Distributed by Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £12 12s. 6d.

It is not easy for anyone who knows Racine's plays at all well to be fair to the translations of them. Perhaps one can begin by saying, quite objectively, that this is the second English edition of the complete plays and that it includes the prefaces and the afterwords of the translator.

As such, in spite of the fact that the translations are high priced, it is assuredly a place in any library. One can also say, uncontentiously, that it is a very accurate version in the sense that it renders every line of Racine's by a line of English.

The translator becomes a kind of poet, which occasionally rhymes, sometimes for good reasons, sometimes apparently arbitrarily. The use is not often twisted and Mr. Solomon keeps close to the syntax of the original. It is a useful text to have alongside Racine for those whose French is weak.

Of course this is not a book which is to be judged simply as a crib. The question is, how good are the translations?

Many of these blues singers each other for a dime; died of drink were blinded with lye water. One sang their songs in penitence, which the lord-poor seemed to human than the dusty. Others sang their time in purgatory, and still a living from their music on earth. A few Leadbelly, Big Bill Broonzy, Sonny Boy Williamson, and others, famous and well-loved in Europe.

What is there left for the new generation? In sing about the rhythm and blues lyrics, have of the simple banality of white and black. The contemporary, hang-up, it seems, cannot sing about the blues. At times, although the musical structure, more frenetic than ever, the functional crisis that Mr. presents in his final chapter.

Only one white group - The Stones has given the "musical structures" a completely new meaning and form. The urban black Chicago groups, chosen pop soul: while only a "pure" veterans still sing about the blues in Mississippi. These are the last of their kind. The blues have changed.

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## The king's man

GILLIAN JONDORF: *Robert Garnier and the Themes of Political Tragedy in the Sixteenth Century*. 182pp. Cambridge University Press. 35s.

Robert Garnier (1545-1590) is generally recognized as the most accomplished of the many authors who followed Jodelle in trying to adapt classical tragedy to the French language and French tastes, but his most enthusiastic admirers have not yet staked his claim in a great play.

He produced essentially rhetorical exercises such as his public expected and enjoyed, but contributed little or nothing to dramatic technique as such. He has, however, much of interest to say about the feelings of a humane and cultivated Frenchman living through the civil wars and the religious wars.

He begins by claiming that Seneca's influence on Garnier has been somewhat exaggerated. (Only three of his eight plays have Senecan themes) and that in any case Seneca may not have been as bad a model as has often been suggested. Much the longest and most interesting part of her book makes the case for a political approach to Garnier's work.

He himself affirms more than once that his plays were meant to be relevant to his own troubled times, and given the inescapable taint of idealism of his contemporaries, it could hardly have been otherwise. Dr. Jondorf wisely rejects any suggestion that he wrote plays to claim a mantle that he was not entitled to.

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A SELECTION

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Poetry and politics, novels and essays, fiction and documents, and publications of texts which are no longer obtainable. Publications of current literary or political interest.

Wolfgang Iser: *Die Akt des Lesens*. (The Act of Reading.) Volume 15.

Barbara Kuhn: *Die Akt des Lesens*. (The Act of Reading.) Volume 15.

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**PAUL BONNECARRERE**  
**Par le sang versé**

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1945-1951

**La République des Contradictions**  
1951-1954

**ANDRE FONTAINE**  
**La Guerre Civile Froide**

**P.H. SPAAK**  
**Combats Inachevés**

**FAYARD**

**ANDRE FROSSARD**  
**Dieu existe, Je L'ai rencontré**

**Cardinal DANIELOU**  
**L'avenir de la Religion**

**PAUL VI**  
**Le Christ et le Drame de conscience moderne**

## Visions of solidarity

**CESAR VALLEJO: Poemas Humanos. Human Poems.** Translated by Clayton Eshleman. 326pp. Cape. £2.5e

The Peruvian poet César Vallejo died in Paris on April 15, 1938, leaving behind him in manuscript the ninety-four poems first published in the following year under the title of *Poemas Humanos*. Many of these poems were written or revised only a few months before his death: together with his other volumes, *Los Heraldos Negros* (1919), *Trilce* (1922), and the sequence of fifteen poems, *Expiación, aparta de mí este cáliz*, they form a highly original body of verse which establishes Vallejo beyond any doubt as a major twentieth-century poet, whose continuing influence in the Spanish-speaking countries is comparable only to that of Neruda.

Though his three principal collections are markedly different from one another, they present an impressive continuity of both themes and technique. Many of the poems in his first volume, *Los Heraldos Negros*, take their vocabulary and mood from slightly older Latin-American poets, notably from Rubén Darío. Yet, despite the conscious imitation (at prevailing modes, there are already signs of a strong personality in the process of finding its own forms. The experience behind the best of these poems is deeply rooted in Vallejo's

native Peru: the tensions of adolescence, set in the framework of a conventional Catholic upbringing, horror at the exploitation of native labour, and nostalgia for the dying grandeur of the pre-Columbian heritage. These things converge at times in a sense of the pointlessness of human suffering and a conviction that God, if he exists, must himself be an imperfect, suffering being.

In *Trilce*, the rhetoric which occasionally flouts the earlier poems is completely discarded: expression is cut down to the bone, resulting in a language which, though often obscure, is wholly authentic and original. The technique of these poems has sometimes been described as Surrealist *avant la lettre*; it would be more accurate to say that Vallejo's deliberate rejection of logical discourse comes from a deeply personal need to explore the sources of his anguish at their most primitive and pre-articulate level. At this stage, Vallejo's poetry is haunted by the feeling of being orphaned in an absurd universe, in which any desire for individual redemption seems doomed to failure. The intricate network of symbolism which plays a large part in these poems embodies the sense that life is a process of constant and progressive fragmentation; that the ideal unity of being is continually broken in existence, and that time develops in a proliferation of separate units which is ended only by death. The most moving poems

in *Trilce*, however, arise directly from Vallejo's own circumstances: the death of his mother, which was to remain a constant obsession in his work, and the break-up of his childhood home, are transfigured, with loss of concrete detail, into an analogy of the human condition itself.

The full implications of this do not appear until *Poemas Humanos*. The two collections are separated by a gap of sixteen years, during which Vallejo lived in Paris, often under conditions of poverty and illness, and became increasingly interested in Marxism. (The experience of two trips to Russia and his meetings with Russian writers of the time, including Mayakovsky, are recorded in his prose-work *Rusia en 1931*, which forms an important source for the understanding of his later poetry.) In terms of his verse, Vallejo's Marxism seems a natural climax, rather than a sudden conversion: the vision of human solidarity which appears in his later poems owes as much to the Christian notion of brotherly love and to the now magnified image of the childhood home as to any strictly Communist ideology. Compared with *Trilce*, the rhythms of *Poemas Humanos* are generally more sweeping and less intense. Nevertheless, it is remarkable how much of the very individual language of *Trilce* is carried over, as Vallejo moves from the analysis of his personal fears to that of the human situation as a whole, a transition made possible by the complete lack of self-regard which is one of the most striking features of his work.

Perhaps the greatest virtue of Mr. Eshleman's edition is that it contains what is probably the best available text of Vallejo's own poems. As for his translations, he has very resisted the temptation to "re-create" the originals, and has provided a literal

version which should be very helpful to any reader with a moderate knowledge of Spanish who is prepared to tackle the poems themselves. The problems of translating Vallejo are in any case formidable, though recent versions by Robert Bly, Charles Trueman and others show that certain poems, at least, can be brought over effectively into English. Much of this work, however, allows the translator very little scope for manoeuvre, so closely is the actual sound of the language implicated in the expression. As an American poet, Mr. Eshleman has clearly been encouraged by the experiments of Projective Verse, whose own experiments in the physiological basis of poetic utterance have something in common with Vallejo's practice. Inevitably, this versions often fall short of the musical assurance which lends conviction to the originals, even where one can only grope for the meaning.

More seriously, there are occasional errors of translation which make for unnecessary obscurity. Thus, the climax of one poem is spoiled by the rendering of its final line: "la cantidat enorme de cosas que cuesta el ser pobre" means not "the enormous quantity of money it costs the poor being", but "the enormous quantity of things it costs to be poor". Similarly, another English line—"un puro de mierda está de creyente"—is made to mean its exact opposite: not "the believer is so full of malice", but "the believer is so free from malice". There are about a dozen mistakes of this order, all of which could easily be revised. However, this qualification apart, Mr. Eshleman's book, with its informative introduction, should supply many readers with an excellent introduction to one of the most passionate and verbally inventive poets of this century.

logism" in his new work because, it seems, his own *The Defeat* (Ruzgrov) had been attacked by "Lof," for being too psychological; and once when we are given a glimpse of Velenin Khebnikov composing his manifesto on aesthetics, seated at a desk in Kharkov in the spring of 1919, covering the paper

with even lines of writing, as if he was copying from a prepared text, and he did not stop until he had finished some sandwiches spread with some kind of unknown rationed cuisine of the epoch of War Communism. Happily, I had enough of them, and the enormous article was written at one sitting.

These glimpses, and the obvious nostalgic fondness which Pervov has for such writers of his own generation as Olesha and Bulgakov, are things that lighten the atmosphere of this collection. Otherwise its nostalgia is elderly and a little pompous: the "great years" have gone, are insufficiently or incorrectly appreciated by the younger generation, and it is entirely in character, therefore, that Pervov should conclude his collection by giving Yevushenko a patronizing sardonic for having an inadequate sense of history.

Introducing this collection, Pervov lays claim to first-hand acquaintance with many of the writers whom he mentions and he even suggests: it is unclear in what exact respect, though he is now a member of the editorial board of the journal *L'opros Literaturny*—that he took some part in their literary work. One therefore lives momentarily in the hope that new information may be given about some aspects of early Soviet literature, for the list of poets and writers with whom Pervov seems to claim acquaintance is remarkably varied and includes (to name only the most prominent) Gorky, Mayakovsky, Yessenin, Blok, Khlebnikov, Bulgakov and Olesha.

The hope is only momentary: this is a collection of very orthodox essays in which Mayakovsky's reference to "stamping on the throat of my song" (the famous quotation from "At the Top of my Voice") is explained as a consequence of his desire to serve the Party, and Khlebnikov, that most precocious and inventive of poets, is defended from the charge of being a Modernist. Despite the orthodox topoi and all the special pleading on behalf of socialist realism, there penetrates through the conformism, in the shape of quotations and the occasional sensitive comment from Pervov himself, something of the non-conformity and obliqueness of Mayakovsky, something of Khlebnikov's sadly underestimated genius (Pervov incidentally makes a plea for republication of his work).

At only two points does the rather staid manner of the editorial paradigm give way to the more authentic, more genuine, more honest, once when we are given an apparently first-hand account of Mayakovsky's first public reading of "Good!" in 1927, which Pervov raised against the poet, for the lack of "psycho-

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These glimpses, and the obvious nostalgic fondness which Pervov has







# The dynamic conquest of joy

GILBERT GADOFFRE: *Claudel et l'univers chinés*. 393pp. Paris: Gallimard. 26fr.

GEORGES CATTANI: *Claudel*. 252pp. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer. EUGENE ROBERTO (Editor): *Leitras da Paul Claudel à Agnès Mayer* (1928-9). *Nota-Book d'Agnès Mayer* (1928-9). 322pp. Dila: Ediluna da Universidade.

PAUL CLAUDEL: *Journal*. Vol. 1. 1904-32. 1,499pp. Paris: Gallimard. 80fr.

RICHARD GRIFFITHS (Editor): *Claudel*. 197pp. Rapp and Whitting. 12.55.

HENRI GUILLEMIN: *Le "Converli"*. *Paul Claudel*. 241pp. Paris: Gallimard. 18fr.

JACQUES MADAULE: *Claudel et le langage*. 315pp. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer. 29.60fr.

Rena d'Histoire du Théâtre. No. 1. 1969. 84pp.

Like General de Gaulle, the English reader has "a certain picture of France" in his mind's eye, and he is equally disconcerted when the facts refuse to conform to the fancy. One heard a great deal, thirty years ago, about the "Descartes line". Like the Mignot line it was supposed to be invulnerable, but unfortunately it also was incomplete. After Descartes' "I think, therefore I am", there was Rousseau's "I feel, therefore I am", and before Descartes there were many other people's "I am, therefore I believe". Paul Claudel stands in this latter posterity, and his intransigent proclamation of belief thus stood in the way of appreciation in a country where he counted on many admirers. If irony is what one expects from a great French writer, there is plenty of it in Claudel; but where his religious convictions were concerned, as he warned Agnès Meyer, he was a man of "iron".

Professor Gadoffre, in a biographical essay which is a model of its kind,

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refers—not without a nuance of distaste—to Claudel's "Catholicisme à l'espagnole". But then Professor Gadoffre is a Cartesian expert, even if he is not a Cartesian *tout court*. M. Cattani, on the other hand, finds a deep correspondence between the imagination and imagery of Claudel and the genius of baroque painting and architecture. If the latter depends on the voluminous where the Gothic depended on the vertical, the comparison is apt: for the purpose of Claudel was not so much an aspiration as a gathering together and an offering—a *rassemblement*. Think of his verse as a snail adjusted to a variable wind, and you have the measure of its audacity and freedom. Here, too, the baroque analogy is pertinent. The adventure of his work is essentially the dynamic conquest of joy, and one is not surprised that his favourite painter should be Rubens. He cannot escape the Cross but, like Teilhard de Chardin and to borrow Teilhard's precept, he climbs with its struggle instead of swooning in its shadow. Claudel had more in common with Teilhard than he was ready to admit, and M. Cattani's analogy with Hopkins is very much to the point. In a letter to Mrs. Meyer, Claudel describes his temperament as "auroral". He was very open to put Pascal behind him, and the "infinite abysses" held no terrors for him because they were the depths of an unfamiliar love.

The recent century of his birth has produced a crop of writings which illustrate both the man and his work. Indeed, the moment has arrived for a definitive biography of Claudel—for M. Louis Chaigne's painstaking but rather pedestrian study is no more than an interim report. You may dislike Claudel and disagree with him; but the size of his personality is incontestable. For all his onathoms launched against the twentieth century, he still belongs to it. He could declare in his gratitude to Rimbaud that "Rimbaud was a prophet, whereas I am only an *haoune de lettres*". He was only incidentally an *homme de lettres*, and he never took *hommes de lettres* at their own valuation. Once he had completed *Le Soulier de Satin*—which is as much as to say, when he had got *Parade de l'Idée* out of his system—he read little else beside the Bible, and he adventured widely into the field of symbolical excess. M. Cattani brings this out very clearly. He reads the New Testament in the light of the Old, not the other way about; and he was haunted by the mystery and the martyrdom of Israel. In politics, on which he wrote hardly at all but with which as a diplomat he had much to do, this kept him apart from the Action Française, whose doctrines he held in "other abomination". But with Protestantism he had no sympathy whatever. In his patient and occasionally impatient attempt to convert Mrs. Meyer, he was up against an obstacle which had as much to do with culture as conviction. Westchester County, N.Y., is not a convertible terrain.

Claudel was not, in fact, a *missionnaire*. The velleities of the subjectivity of Gide, the hierarchies of Sures, they all distressed him to the end. He was not without humility—public appearances notwithstanding—but he was too certain of his own conviction to be easily led into other people's ruts. In life, as in letters, he was something of a *missionnaire*. All the writers here under review knew him personally: Professor Gadoffre perhaps less well than the others, but access to his legends during the years of his consulate to China compensated for the lack of close acquaintance in a study which is strictly impersonal, and none the less valuable for that. For Professor Gadoffre combines a natural sympathy for the *chinoiseries* with a contempt for the *chinoiseries* which, at the turn of the century so frivolously disgusted it. He not only shows Claudel as a remarkably successful *homme d'affaires*—and the French presence in China was uniquely a matter of *affaires*—but he relates the exquisite prose poems of

*Connaissance de l'Est* to the young consul's movements and activities. "If he were not an Ambassador," he says, "he would be a poet." But then Professor Gadoffre is a Cartesian expert, even if he is not a Cartesian *tout court*. M. Cattani, on the other hand, finds a deep correspondence between the imagination and imagery of Claudel and the genius of baroque painting and architecture. If the latter depends on the voluminous where the Gothic depended on the vertical, the comparison is apt: for the purpose of Claudel was not so much an aspiration as a gathering together and an offering—a *rassemblement*. Think of his verse as a snail adjusted to a variable wind, and you have the measure of its audacity and freedom. Here, too, the baroque analogy is pertinent. The adventure of his work is essentially the dynamic conquest of joy, and one is not surprised that his favourite painter should be Rubens. He cannot escape the Cross but, like Teilhard de Chardin and to borrow Teilhard's precept, he climbs with its struggle instead of swooning in its shadow. Claudel had more in common with Teilhard than he was ready to admit, and M. Cattani's analogy with Hopkins is very much to the point. In a letter to Mrs. Meyer, Claudel describes his temperament as "auroral". He was very open to put Pascal behind him, and the "infinite abysses" held no terrors for him because they were the depths of an unfamiliar love.

Professor Gadoffre compares the work of Paul Claudel to a cathedral, where the superstructure is Gothic—perhaps he should have said baroque—and the crypt is Taoist. For the passivities of Buddha and the maxims of Confucius Claudel had little use; but there were aspects of Chinese asceticism which his Catholicism was able to digest. Moreover the years of his consulate in Fow-tien were the years of his liaison with Ysé of *Parade de l'Idée*. His *Journal*, of which the first part is now published with a special introduction by François Vaillat, begins on the day she left him, August 1, 1914—and continues with the birth of their daughter—January 22, 1915.

Professor Gadoffre is able to correct certain misapprehensions due to the dramatist's legitimate transposition of his own drama. He had already met Ysé and her husband in China—"première apparition" as his agenda records—before the decisive encounter on the boat. Indeed, the veil is gradually being lifted on an experience which in one sense contradicted him in another sense completed, the discovery of Rimbaud and the blinding moment of illumination in Notre-Dame. Claudel never concealed his adolescent sexuality, but Ysé was the first to give him knowledge of woman in the fullness of the flesh. It was a knowledge that, even after the sublimations of *Le Soulier de Satin*, he was never to forget and from which he was never completely to recover. Professor Gadoffre shows him as first less easily reconciled to Ysé's flight than has been commonly supposed, and the letters to Agnès Meyer demonstrate his concern for the woman who had been his mistress and for the daughter she had given him. No longer the adventures of *Parade de l'Idée*, but solitary and reduced in circumstances, the Ysé of 1929 could still refer to Claudel as a "demi-moine".

Her memory was as acute as his, and no less wounded. The shadow of a failed vocation, the categorical refusal of Ligué—overturning all Claudel's career. His yearning for the priesthood—the difficult acceptance of what he regarded as second-class citizenship in the kingdom of the faithful—is already evident in the revised version of *La Ville*. The anarchist of yesterday has become the priest, if not the capitalist, of today. Professor Gadoffre, in his admiration for Claudel the writer, is anxious to rescue him from his *bleusant* devotees. But it must be admitted that Claudel did little to escape their clutches. His faith was Tridentine and triumphalist, and one wonders a little what he would have said to the Second Vatican Council. There is no need to wonder what he would have said to the virtual excommunication of liturgical Latin. Claudel was the reverse of a primitive writer, for all the power of his temperament and the Michael-angelesque muscularity of his verse. Ramuz described him—as he might have described Péguy—as the originator of a "passion" style in poetry. It is true that his faith was no more than a *petit fourgon*, and that he carried the dry soil of Champagne in his blood and bones. But he was also a deeply educated man, passing first of his year into the Quai d'Orsay in spite of a social background, and then into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and finally into the Ministry of Education.

M. Cattani reveals the breadth and depth of Claudel's reading, and the subsequent barometer of his tastes. To Aeschylus and Virgil he was always faithful, but one is surprised by his admiration for Iphigénie. Philo- dar taught him the possibilities of the good effect in the best of the *Œuvres* of *Œuvres*, for they are not all of equal quality. He retreated a little from his first enthusiasm for Shakespeare. The later discovery of Racine made him critical of a loose dramatic structure, although here the baroque analogy might have corrected his judgment. But he never tired of the final plays, *Cytherea*, *The Tempest*, and *The Winter's Tale*; and he had a knowledge, remarkable in a Frenchman, of the minor Elizabethans, Gifford and Trollope he began by desisting, but afterwards admired; Stendhal he detested always. He confessed to a penance for *Italo* and a reluctant admiration for Proust. Indeed, M. Cattani, who has a better right to speak about Proust than most people, discovers interesting correspondences with Claudel. In both there is a serious and profound sense of comedy; Claudel's Pontius Pilate is "cher collègue" to M. de Marpois.

Although his mind was closed to certain excellences in literature, as his ear—once it had refused the intoxication of Wagner—was only intermittently sensitive to music. Claudel was a profound and illuminating critic. What matters above all is the achievement of an effect. The detailed analysis of causes teaches one nothing, and very often it leads one astray. When one cause meets another, then an effect is produced, but I have insisted in *L'Art Poétique* on the gratuitous nature of this meeting.

The quotation is taken at random

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# Ballads and romances

**ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ-MONINO (Editor):** *Cancionero de romances* (Merth Nacio, Antwerp, 1550). 833pp. 480pts. *Romancero hispanico* (Lucas Rodriguez, Alcalá, 1582). 271pp. 455pts. *Cancionero de romances* (Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, Sevilla, 1583). 341pp. Madrid: Castille. *Poesía y canciones*. 187pp. Madrid: Real Academin Española.

**Abaco: 2. 272pp. Madrid: Castille. 120pts.**

**MAXIME CHEVALIER:** *Los temas aristocráticos en el romancero y en la poesía española del siglo de oro*. 340pp. Madrid: Castille. 450pts. **PAUL BENICHO:** *Romancero judeo-español de Marruecos*. 372pp. Madrid: Castille. 450pts. *Creación poética en el romancero hispanico*. 180pp. Madrid: Gedra. 100pts.

Spanish ballads have never failed to enchant English readers, and their capacity for self-renewal makes the study of them something of far more than antiquarian interest. The past year or two has provided a real state of publications on Spanish ballads and other popular forms of Spanish poetry, in which the distinguished bibliographer Antonio Rodríguez-Monino has had a large share. He has embarked on the systematic publication, with full bibliographical studies, of the earliest *romanceros* or ballad-collections of the Golden Age, of which the first three have so far appeared. Martín Nacio's *Cancionero de romances*, published at Antwerp in 1550, represents the first attempt to make anything like a complete collection, ballads having earlier circulated principally in broadsheets. The story of how the compiler took bundles of these *piegas* streets back to Antwerp has a parallel in that told by Professor Wilson of the activities of Samuel Pepys. Nacio combined a few oral with a large number of written sources, and made a first attempt at classification of the 156 ballads he prints, following a scheme which many subsequent students of the Spanish ballads have used as a basis for their own.

Lucas Rodríguez's *Romancero hispanico*, published at Alcalá in 1582, may have had an earlier edition in 1579, but this has never been discovered. Rodríguez, like Martín Nacio, drew to some extent from chap-books, but the work has a more "cultured" tone; and apart from the glosses on some of the *romances*, a number of songs and sonnets and an eclogue, some by known authors, have been appended. Professor Rodríguez-Monino points out the neglect of the volume by, among others, Catala Reig, who published her *El Cantar de Sancho II y cerco de Zamora* in Madrid in 1947.

Lorenzo de Sepúlveda's *Cancionero de romances* represents the fourth and final version of a collection of *romances* probably first published in Seville before 1550, and likely to have been known to Martín Nacio, who commended the 1566 version. Like the other volumes so far published in this series of ballads planned by Castille, this edition of Sepúlveda has a very full index of first lines of *romances*, with a list of the collections in which they are to be found.

Rodríguez-Monino claims in his edition of Sepúlveda's work that he aims by his efforts in this series to avoid the nonsense and the bibliographical chaos which have pervaded studies of the Spanish *romancero* during the past three-quarters of a century. Don Antonio already has an enormous achievement in his credit in his meticulous editing and bibliographical study of Spanish poetry, and he speaks with magisterial authority on the subject in his inaugural lecture to the Spanish Royal Academy in 1968. Now published under the title *Poesía y canciones* (siglo XVI), Modestly describing his offering as "a handful of roots which, though useful, can hardly be considered to have any aesthetic quality," the new Academician, taking as his theme the difficulty of writing the history of sixteenth-century Spanish poetry, outlines the sources of

Information in published volumes, manuscripts, chap-books and anthologies of *romances*.

He chooses on this occasion to concentrate on the *cancionero*, which, as he recognizes, have their limitations as sources of information, like all the others. Among the chief of these limitations is the lack of discrimination frequently shown by their collectors, who were also in the unreliable habit of copying from their memory of oral renderings. The *romanceros* do nevertheless teach us certainly as well as and perhaps better than the other sources what people actually read and enjoyed in sixteenth-century Spain. Originally works compiled for the cultured few, their growing popularity is indicated not only by frequent reprinting and revision, but by the replacement as time went on of the larger volumes by pocket editions. Successive versions of the *cancioneros* show an attempt to compromise between natural conservatism and the desire to keep up with the times, which showed an increasing popular taste for the new Italianate metres. Many of the collections reflect personal or local interests, and the intrinsic appeal of their content is only one of the many features which deserve the scholar's attention, alongside such matters as problems of attribution. Surprisingly few *cancioneros* are exclusively devoted to religious poems, but many such poems appear in almost all the collections, and reveal most movingly the sensibility and devotion of the ordinary Spanish people.

In spite of Rodríguez-Monino's modest claims for his work, he has included enough charming samples (among which those complaining of the weather and the atmosphere of England, probably inspired by the traffic resulting from the marriage between Philip II and Mary Tudor, are particularly engaging) to show that the rewards of this kind of bibliographical exercise are not entirely altruistic. "These are the four requisites for the proper writing of the history of Castilian poetry in the time of Charles V and Philip II," and who ever follows the battle-cry will, one feels, be well rewarded. Full bibliographical descriptions of the *cancioneros* and some facsimiles complete this very attractive volume, which includes a rather sour and tedious reply to the inaugural speech from Camilo José Cela.

Professor Rodríguez-Monino is one of the contributors to the second volume in a new series of essays on Spanish literature under the title *Abaco*. In "Tres *cancioneros* metropolitanos (Poesía religiosa de los siglos de oro)" he describes and lists the contents of three volumes dating from approximately 1560 to 1600, which probably had their origin in Jesuit houses. Another essay, by Damien Sanaul, incidentally, deals with the gradual triumph of assonance over rhyme in the Spanish ballads, the watershed being round about 1580.

Although the *romances* dealt most characteristically with Spanish history and legend, their subject matter was of course not limited to those themes; and the genius of the ballad has been demonstrated among other ways in its capacity for incorporating new material, often pulling not only as a purveyor of information but, largely unconsciously, as an educational medium. Professor Maxime Chevalier, in *Los temas aristocráticos en el romancero y la poesía española del siglo de oro*, shows how the ballad-writers and other poets writing between 1530 and 1650 tapped the rich new seam provided by the Italian epic. Chevalier has collected a hundred or so compositions more or less directly inspired by the *Orlando Furioso*, and foundered from the *Orlando Innamorato*. Among them are eighty-eight *romances* (Durán's *Romancero General* included thirty-two) of which thirty-two are the property of Sepúlveda. Although the models of the atmosphere of the

*Orlando Furioso* seems very far removed from the medieval inspiration of the *romances* proper of the Carolingian cycle, it is fairly clear that sixteenth-century Spaniards made the transition from Roland to Orlando without difficulty.

Those who adapted Ariosto, in the manner of all makers of ballads, took from him very much what they wanted, and were not always too particular what they did to him in the process, at worst mercilessly eliminating the Italian's brilliant images and making a hell of Phœbus out of the accessible as they forced it into Ariosto's elegant metres. Other poets, of whom Pedro de Padilla is the best example, used metres and were more concerned with aesthetic considerations; but chose to concentrate on the sentimental rather than the chivalresque elements, and aimed to produce something like a new genre. A third group of writers, showing a greater awareness of the style and the beauty of the *romances* proper, selected scenes from the *Orlando* which suited the brevity and dramatic interest of the ballad type.

Professor Chevalier has classified these poems inspired by Ariosto by subject rather than chronologically, although within the sections (arms and letters, Ruggieri and Bradamante, Angelica and Medoro) he follows the order of events in the *Orlando Furioso* as far as possible. The value of the poetry is such is rather mixed, but the occasional tedium and sentimentality are relieved by some charming

ling down-to-earth touches, like the unchangeable question addressed to Medoro in Poem 72 ("¿Vale o leal de Medoro?"): "Why bother about the birds eating what will surely be eaten by the worms?"

Professor Paul Benichou published the first important collection of Jewish-Spanish ballads from Morocco in 1944, and what we have to the *Romancero judeo-español de Marruecos* is a revised and enlarged version of this work, with the content grouped now by subject, according to accepted norms, and including a study of other collections of Moroccan ballads published in the past twenty years. Nowhere better than here can we see the continuing tradition of poetic creation represented by the Spanish *romancero* from the Middle Ages until modern times. Some of the ballads printed in this work were transcribed, with their music, by an aunt of Professor Benichou, Mrs. R. Serfati, from oral tradition passed on by her mother, who heard them sung in Morocco as lullabies or to accompany games. In recording these ballads, Benichou has aimed to conserve the characteristic archaic Judeo-Spanish pronunciation, using the conventions of old Castilian orthography. Among the verses recorded here are some which have been preserved only among the Jews of Morocco, and there are some of which the only versions known are the Moroccan ones. There are a fairly large number of ballads of the kind usually described

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# Rogues and clerics

JOHN J. RICHETTI: *Popular Fiction before the Revolution*. 274pp. Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press. \$2.65.

NATASHA WÜRZBACH (Editor): *The Novel in Letters*. 208pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. \$2.25.

WILLIAM C. SLATTERY (Editor): *The Richardsonian Correspondence and the Shustler's Problems to "Clarissa"*. 338pp. Southern Illinois University Press. London: Falmer and Simon, \$3.10s.

There is almost invariably a mutual interpenetration within which compelling fancies of sex, or power, or even of the delivery of such and effectively. He proceeds to demonstrate this confrontation in the stories of rogues and whores, of pirates, of madmen who loved "not wisely but too well", and of those more innocent maidens who are pursued and persecuted by lustful males. These stock figures provided in their different contexts vicarious experience "not only of exciting worlds of power, sex, and influence, but of a satisfying moral universe where the reader felt himself comfortably on the side of virtue". Psychological verisimilitude is almost irrelevant in this sort of fantasy literature; and the authors are known to Mrs. Richardson enter into the work of Richardson, it is not to replace the secular-religious confrontation but to provide it with a more realistic setting.

The only fault in this excellent and intelligent book is that Mr. Richetti does not apply his findings more fully to Defoe and Richardson. He has indeed an extended discussion of *Robinson Crusoe* and some highly relevant comments on *Robinson Crusoe*, but his references to Richardson are unhelpfully brief. When they do appear they are so pertinent that one wishes for more. Writing for instance, on Mrs. Haywood, he writes: "Mrs. Haywood, who 'preserve their innocence in that we will not forget that the seduction we are, witnessing is the tragic conflict which female virtue is forever doomed to engage in, with irresistible masculine evil', he goes on to observe: 'It is Richardson's achievement, by the way, to rescue this mythology from its degraded position as moralistic covering for erotic fantasy (or at least to make the cover thicker)'."

Mr. Richetti is far too intelligent to make high claims for what he is willing to let die: indeed the states roundly that "the great bulk of eighteenth-century pro-Richardsonian popular narrative is largely beyond redemption—morally or aesthetically". He has, however, been over the *Clarissa* and has returned with some important findings about the interests and expectations of readers in the early eighteenth century, and about what he calls the "modulated features" of popular narrative literature in the period. From a literary point of view the importance of *Clarissa* fiction before Richardson is to be found in the way it illuminates the fiction of Defoe and Richardson, and the extent to which those two novels shared the same ideological and "myths" as inform the popular fiction of their literary interiors.

In some important respects Mr. Richetti finds himself at variance with Mr. Ian Watt's influential study, *The Rise of the Novel*. Mr. Watt reminds us, it is written with some audience in mind, that that audience is "a specific group during a particular historical period". What the audience of the early eighteenth century wanted (and what it got from the sub-literature that Mr. Richetti has examined) was often very different from the realistic and circumstantial picture of life that Mr. Watt associates with the rise of the novel.

The constant element that Mr. Richetti finds in the varied popular fiction of the period is "an eighteenth-century version of the traditional confrontation of the secular and the religious"; and this is present not merely in the plots outpourings of Mrs. Rowe, but in the most scandalous and pornographic novels of her contemporaries, where

a variety of traditions including Arabic legend, have combined to produce a poem in which the idea of a love affair between a Moorish king and the city of Granada overshadows the historical and epic reality, producing a strange and bewitching atmosphere which is no less powerful when we are let into more and more of the secret of how it is achieved.

In the Spanish speaking world the cultivation of popular poetry has always gone hand in hand with the popular preservation of more cultured material. For example, *Romancero general* is different from the *romancero* "Abenamar", and different again from *romancero* "Ingenio y Medoro"; but the use of a cultured popular material is perhaps less useful than one might assume at first sight for defining the differences for than it might be elsewhere than in Spain. That the works in question are not for this reason any the less may be judged by the difficulty of pointing to parallels outside the peninsula. If these recent editions and studies do not go very far towards explaining why the Spanish ballads and songs continue to exercise such an enormous appeal, they provide a tremendously rich body of source material for study and speculation.

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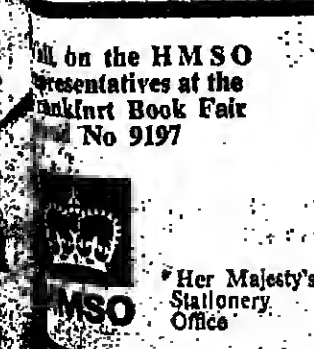
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The song was written and set to music by M. I. Blanter well before the Second World War, and the soldier on the frontier for whom Katryusha conserves her love must have been a reference to clashes with Japan in the Far East. War was to be in the air, says Imskovsky, and he claims that in September, 1939, when Soviet forces occupied western Ukraine and Byelorussia, the population greeted the "liberating army" with "Katryusha" ready on their lips.

It passed to Western Europe, to the French and Italian Resistance while in the Soviet Union it sprouted conflagrations, parades, new versions. Two hundred variants were made and it is a pity that in the

poetry are always written in simple and intelligible language. In his articles about song-writing he is more specific in his advice—twenty or thirty lines he says is quite enough for a song—and these pages are perhaps the most helpful in the book.

Isakovsky was already writing in 1914, has lived through RAPP and the whole history of Soviet literature. One cannot say that his memoirs are at all vivid or profound, when compared, say, with Katayev's memoirs of Bunin and Mayakovsky's recollections translated into English (*The Other Oblivion*). Gorky was kind to him; he was Faddeyev, but there is no doubt the latter's own tragedy simplified his

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## Books received

### Aviation

WIND, DIANE, with DAMPSTER, DEBRA. *The Narrow Margin*. 361pp. Arrow Books, 25s.

When work was begun on the film of the Battle of Britain, Mr. Wind was called in as adviser. German consultants were also engaged. Out of this process of joint checking an even clearer picture of the battle emerged, and a great many extra photographs became available. Taking account of the new information, Mr. Wind has slightly revised the book published eight years earlier, a book already widely appreciated for its comprehensive study of the determining factors as well as of the events. The new volume is particularly valuable for the pictures taken in the air and on the ground by the Germans: pictures which show, for instance, how much the enemy knew about their targets. One view of the splendidly camouflaged airfield at Northolt is shown annotated with the sites of hangars, workshops, blue-print pens and flak positions.

### Biography and Memoirs

HARRIS, MOLLIE. *A Kind of Magic*. 222pp. Chatto and Windus, 30s. Mrs. Harris spent her childhood in the 1920s as one of a family of seven children in an Oxfordshire village. The time, she recalls were hard and her parents tried to struggle to provide food, let alone comforts or luxuries. Mrs. Harris's cottage home was on the old rural labourer's type; two rooms up and two down (some of the children sleeping on the landing), with dry closets, water from the well, a big black grate for cooking and oil candles for lighting. Her memories are mostly happy ones.

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however: of games, gossip, village festivities, occasional visits to grandparents in the Cotswolds, and the like. There is a good deal about now largely forgotten rural remedies and superstitions: baking, jamming and blackberrying and the many giggling concerns of growing girls. All this is told in a pleasantly rambling, anecdotal manner, without much poetry but with a lot of humour.

WILLIAMSON, JAMES A. *Hawkins of Plymouth*. 348pp. A. and C. Black, £2 2s.

This life of the Elizabethan seaman, by a leading authority on Tudor maritime history, was originally published twenty years ago. Dr. Black revised it before his death and added some new material, including details of Hawkins's proceedings in the Canaries based on Señor Rumeu de Armas's researches in the Spanish archives.

### Chess

CARSON, W. *Game and Play of the Chess 1474*. Verbatim reprint of the first edition. With an introduction by William E. A. Axon. 201pp. The British Chess Magazine, £1 10s.

The British Chess Magazine has done chess bibliophiles a great service in reprinting this edition (originally published in 1883) of one of the earliest of all printed books. It is not really a work on chess in the sense of teaching the reader how to play but, as was so much loved by the medieval writers, a series of parables and stories with a most luscious relationship to chess, i.e., about Kings, Bishops, Knights, &c., in real life. The work, which has the distinction of being mentioned in Scott's *The Antiquary*, is entertaining even now.

DICKENS, ANTHONY. *A Guide to Fairy Chess*. Richmond, Surrey: The Q Press, 66pp. £2 2s.

This second edition of a really poetic and fascinating section of chess brings the consideration of the subject right up to 1968. How involved and fascinating the work is can be seen by

single illustration: a new piece, the Protean King, acquires the rank of each piece captured, until the next capture alters it—and this is only one of the more hum-drum inventions!

GRANT, L. *Chess Sets*. 82pp. Studio Vista, 21s.

This is an intriguing and well-written work that, in the process of giving the history and description of the pieces, also illuminates the history of the game, particularly its early stages. Copiously and beautifully illustrated, it is especially strong in the description of modern chess sets, some of which are most attractive—notably that devised by Mnn Ray. Still, one must agree that the Staunton pattern as preferred by most chess-players is the best for playing purposes.

KOTOV, ALEXANDER, and others. *World Chess Championship, Moscow, 1969*. 33pp. Soviet Weekly, 6s.

With commendable promptness *Soviet Weekly* has issued a booklet containing the games of the Petrov-Spassky match for the World Championship. The annotations, being by such experts as Kotov and other Soviet grand-masters, are valuable and some attractive photographs go to make up a little book that is more worthwhile than many a more pretentious work.

PLINY *Letters and Panegyrics*. Translated by Betty Radice. Vol. 1: 563 pp. Vol. 2: 586pp. Heinemann, 25s. each.

It is more than fifty years since a revised version of William Melmoth's translation of Pliny's *Letters* was published in the Loeb Library. Even if it was considered by some "a minor English classic", it was often loose, inaccurate and verbose, and so this more accurate and up-to-date translation is welcome. It is based on the "Oxford Classical Text" of Sir Roger Mynors, and was originally published in the "Penguin Classics" series. It is eminently readable in a good modern style, and, together with the *Panegyrics*, well deserved to confront its original in this new and perhaps more permanent setting.

WEAVER, T. B. L. *An Introduction to Sophocles*. 220pp. Methuen, 32s.

In this new edition of a work published in 1936 there are three pages of addenda and corrigenda, and a two-page appendix on "The Early Plays of Sophocles and Euripides". The dating of many has been revised, and there is much of interest on the evidence of vase-paintings and the recensions of the two poets to each other. Though a great deal has been published on Sophocles (844 articles and books in the years 1939 to 1959 alone), Professor Webster's hope that his work can still serve its modest purpose of providing "a sort of comparative grammar of Sophoclean drama" is well justified.

### Drama

MIDDLETON, THOMAS. *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*. Edited by R. B. Parker. 162pp. Methuen, 36s.

When Middleton's comedy was produced at the Royal Court Theatre in 1966 it was (one single performance excepted) the first professional revival of the play for 350 years. It had a mixed reception, though *The Times* applauded "this bawdy, realistic and brilliantly directed comedy of Jacobean London". Two especially interesting features of Mr. Parker's introduction are his detective work in fixing the date of the play's first performance by tracing contemporary allusions—which point to the year 1612—and his remarks on Middleton's stage directions as illuminating Jacobean theatre design. The original quarto of 1630 is the basis of the edition, but spelling and punctuation have been modernized.

### Education

HOYLE, BEN. *The Role of the Teacher*. 100pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 10s. (hardback) 6s. (paperback).

During the last few years the teacher has been the subject of much

society at large. His public image is not forgotten and in this respect Mr. Hoyle's coinage of the term "teaching profession" is rather than "teaching profession" could be useful to the future. Like the other works in this series, the book extensively covers existing thought on its subject, and although slim includes a long bibliography and useful suggestions for further reading.

HYAM, RONALD. *A History of Isleworth Grammar School*. 78pp. Isleworth Grammar School. This history extending over more than 300 years and the Librarian of Magdalen College, Cambridge, one of its Old Boys, here records its story down to the present time. It began about 1630 as a charity school for girls, where social control and not intellectual improvement was the main consideration and children "could be given principles but not opinions".

To more recent times, as a grammar school under the control of the British and Foreign School Society, its purpose was conceived in the one of combating further imperial decline, while the present century saw the school undergo further change and development under some notable headmasters. Mr. Hyam's book, an accomplished example of a school history, also illuminates the slow evolution of English ideas about the true purposes of education.

### History

BRADY, A. *The History of Kingswood Forest*. 288pp. Kingswood Bookshop, £2 5s.

There is of course a demand for facsimiles of really old and valuable books which collectors can hardly hope to acquire in the original, but it is an open question whether the same can be said for books less than a century old, such as this history of Kingswood Forest in Gloucestershire, published in 1891. Still, Brady's history of the vanished forest—always a small one, but conveniently close to Bristol for royal sport—and of the forest manors and villages is full of local information presented in the style and format of eighty years ago. The book is both a good history and a good introductory matter of local history.

CHURCH, R. A. *Kewicks in Hurdware*. 340pp. Newton Abbot: David and Charles, £3 3s.

The history of this Birmingham firm of manufacturers is followed through five generations of the family from its origins in the late eighteenth century down to today. More than half the book is concerned with the present century, a time of decline and recovery almost fully covered by the existing records, and Mr. Church uses these in illustration of the wider industrial change, this period has witnessed.

JENKINS, J. GILBERT. *The Welsh Woollen Industry*. 427pp. Cardiff: National Museum of Wales, £2 15s.

In the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans is a large collection, including a re-erected mill, to illustrate the history of the woollen industry in Wales. Mr. Jenkins, who published a brief account of this particular mill, later extended his researches to the whole industry and the present book is a detailed history of this Welsh industry down the centuries.

MERRIFIELD, RALPH. *Roman London*. 212pp. Cassell, £2 10s.

Mr. Merrifield, of the Guildhall Museum, is a well-informed guide for anyone setting out to find visible traces of Roman London as still remain. And a guide is essential, for the relics of Rome are to be sought not only in the museums but often in such generally inaccessible places as the basements of office blocks where the explorer can penetrate only by courtesy of the owners. The background is skilfully filled in: the life of Roman London, its roads and defences, its religion. Many illustrations, among which are two of the decorated silver vessels and a mirror which the author calls the most dramatic of the finds at the "Mithraeum" (Mithraea) and the conceptual use of which has been the subject of some debate.

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